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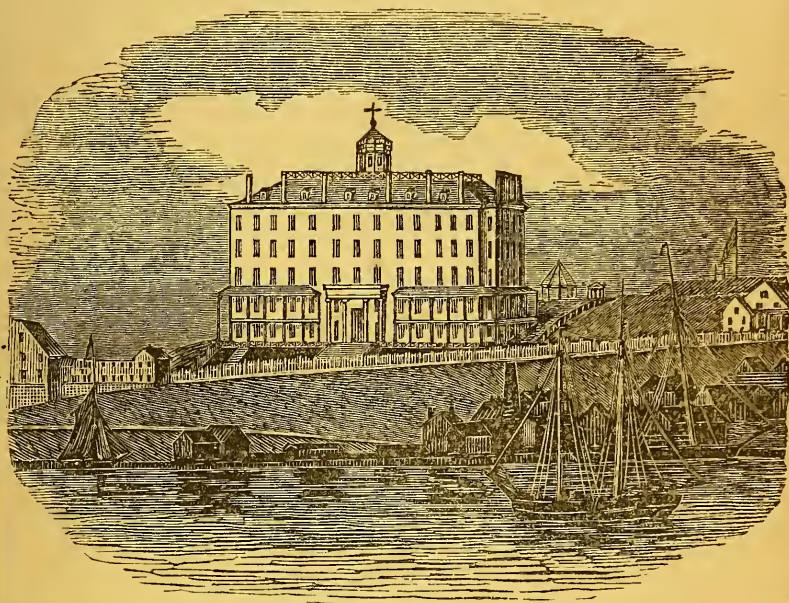
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July 3. 1886.

Given to the
Massachusetts Historical Society
BY

John W. Winthrop



THE
PERKINS INSTITUTION
AND
MASSACHUSETTS
ASYLUM FOR THE BLIND.



Eleventh ANNUAL REPORT
OF
THE TRUSTEES.
1843.

EASTBURN'S PRESS.



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ELEVENTH
ANNUAL REPORT
OF
THE TRUSTEES
OF THE
PERKINS INSTITUTION
AND
MASSACHUSETTS
ASYLUM FOR THE BLIND,
TO THE
CORPORATION.

BOSTON:
JOHN H. EASTBURN, PRINTER.

1843.

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ANNUAL REPORT.

THE TRUSTEES TO THE CORPORATION.

GENTLEMEN :

The following report for the year 1842, is respectfully submitted.

The number of inmates at the commencement of the year was sixty-two: of these five have been regularly discharged; two have left for the purpose of trying to earn their own livelihood, and one has died. There have been fourteen new admissions, so that the number of blind persons in the establishment, is now sixty-eight; and of deaf and dumb persons two, making in all seventy. Of these thirty-three are from Massachusetts; the others are from Maine, Vermont, New Hampshire, Connecticut, New York and South Carolina. The pupils from Massachusetts, with a single exception, may be considered as State Beneficiaries, for although by the terms of the grant from the State, we are required to receive only twenty pupils; we have no disposition to restrict

the number, but have received all applicants who are of the proper age and condition, and shall continue to do so.

The pupil whose loss we have to lament, was Orin Moore, an amiable and interesting boy of nine years of age, who was much beloved by his teachers and all his comrades. It was a sad bereavement, but when we consider that it is the only one which has occurred in our numerous household for more than two years, we must feel grateful for our happy exemption from the usual mortality.

The effect produced upon a community like ours, by the death of one of its members, is interesting in a psychological point of view, and has not escaped the speculations of philosophers. Diderot says, "since of all those external demonstrations which excite in us ideas of pain and consequent pity, the blind can be affected only by the sound of groans, I suspect them generally of hard-heartedness."

"We, ourselves, do we not cease to pity, when distance or the minuteness of objects produce the same effect upon us as want of sight does upon a blind man? So much do our virtues depend upon the sensations, and upon the manner in which external things affect us. Thus I doubt not that many, if not afraid of punishment, would rather kill a man who was so far off as to appear no larger than a swallow, than to cut the throat of an ox with their own hands."

However ingenious this reasoning may seem, the apparent inference from it of inhumanity among the blind, is not confirmed by experience.

It is true that the shroud, the coffin and the pall ;

the crape, the hearse and the slow procession awaken the sympathy and the grief of beholders; but, be it remembered, that these are the effects—the tender demonstrations, and not the cause of the sorrow of the bereaved. The blind do not have any less acuteness and strength of the social affections than others, but on the contrary, these affections seem to be even more developed; and nature, baulked of exhibiting her power in one direction, puts it forth with increased energy in another. Or rather, to speak more correctly, they prove that the law of exercise applies to the social as well as to the intellectual faculties: the diminished field for action, as well as the sense of dependence, causes the blind to yearn with more intensity for close social communion with others; this communion becomes very dear, and when its bonds are broken, the sense of desolation is exceedingly keen.

The instinctive dread of death which nature plants in us all for self-preservation, acts quite as strongly, perhaps indeed even more strongly among the blind: so that they need not the sight of the sombre trappings ‘and the suits of woe’ with which others are wont to associate death; they need not to see the pallid cheek, the glazed eye, and the first startling marks of “decay’s effacing fingers,” in order to make them shrink from dissolution. They cling to life as others do, instinctively, and without regard to the amount of its advantages and pleasures. Hence the falsity of the oft-quoted remark, “we go out from the world as from a delightful theatre, the blind man goes out as from a dungeon; if he has less pleasure in living, at least

he has less regret at dying.” The world is not necessarily a dungeon to the blind man : nay ! it may be to him a theatre redolent of music ; it may be a stage on which he finds scope for the action of his faculties, and the gratification of his desires ; but, if it be not, still he clings to it, and still he regards separation from it as the greatest of evils.

Death has occurred among our inmates very rarely ; but whenever it has torn one of them away, it has left awe stricken and bleeding hearts, long and tenderly to deplore the loss.

This leads us to remark upon another peculiarity of blindness as compared with what are generally considered the great calamities of life, viz : its moral effects upon the sufferer. There is no part of the body which is guarded with such sensitive care as the eye, and an injury to vision is considered worse than the loss of a limb. The sense of hearing for all moral and intellectual purposes is more important than the sense of sight ; and persons born blind become, *cæteris paribus*, more intelligent than those born deaf. Nevertheless the sight of a deaf person, or even of one deprived of his limbs, does not excite so much compassion, as does the appearance of one blind. Most persons would prefer to be deaf, and even to throw in a limb or two, rather than to be blind ; and yet, it is found, as a general rule, that blind persons are much happier, not only than the deaf, but than those who have suffered any very great mutilation, or any considerable physical deformity. We do not mean here to discuss the question whether it is a greater misfortune to be blind or deaf ; that was well disposed of, by the sightless

Rodenbach, when he said, sight is more important for the poor man, hearing for the rich one : but we wish only to make such suggestions as arise naturally from considering the fact of the general happiness of the blind.

When we consider that the social state is not elected by men, but that they are impelled to it by the irresistible cravings of their nature, and that these cravings can be fully gratified only through the medium of vocal language, we perceive at once, the privation of speech must greatly retard if it does not entirely prevent the human development. It is true that the expanding mind, like the germinating plant, if prevented from following its natural bent, will find another, less direct ; and the dumb child cut off from gratifying his yearnings for social communion, by vocal language, immediately sets about forming for himself a language of signs which is usually called natural language. But how poor and imperfect is this at best ; and how is the deaf mute hampered and dwarfed in his mental growth, while the blind child, catching and imitating every sound, and every intonation of the voice, is each hour putting himself in new intellectual and moral relations, with the things and persons about him ; for, be it remarked, vocal language is not only the natural vehicle for intellectual communication, but it is the most perfect, indeed the only one, for close social and moral intercourse.

Hence we see young persons who have never had special instruction, attaining the most free and perfect use of language, as it regards the moral attributes and affections. Hence when the dumb youth

is taking his first painful lessons in that wonderful substitute which philosophy has supplied to him,—and laboring to understand such expressions as *would* and *should*, the blind child is perfectly familiar not only with every varying tone of affection or emotion, but he may be listening with delight to the words of the moralist or the verse of the poet. It is in the intellectual perception of external relations that he is behind others. The long night of his life knows no morning; the ever changing, but ever beautiful face of nature, is to him a blank; and not only so, but all forms of expression, founded upon the countless changes of light and shade, so numerous in all languages, are to him of vague and uncertain import. Then there are many forms of existence so obvious that no one ever thinks of telling them to children; things which the simplest books do not explain. Who would think, for instance, of telling a child that a horse had four legs, and a hen but two;* yet how is the blind child to know it, unless he feels of the animals? It is here, as was said before, in the perception of certain external relations, that he is cramped, and it is the province of his instructor to supply to him, as far as may be, the means of arriving at a knowledge of these relations.

* We have known blind persons of good intellect, who were ignorant of facts of this kind. Sometimes they get false notions from what they hear read; for instance, some of our intelligent pupils supposed, for a long time, that a comet was a bird, because an American Poet says,

“The Comet: he is on his way
And singing as he flies;”

and they naturally supposed that whatever flies and sings must be a bird. This would be the natural inference of all persons who never saw a comet, so difficult is it to find teachers or books that do not propagate errors.

This can be done to a considerable extent, but not entirely; nevertheless, unhappiness is not the necessary, or even the common result to the blind, for their intellectual faculties find a wide field for exercise in the other countless forms of matter. The palpable variety of surface and consistence; the faint but perceptible diversity of odors; the shadowy differences of taste; and above all, the world of sound with its exhaustless variety of expression, and its yet unexplored resources for harmonious combinations—these, in all of which the blind child finds an infinitude of relations imperceptible to us—these give pleasant employment, and consequent strength to his mere knowing powers. But it is a small matter, if this alone be the result of education. The legitimate province of the intellect is to guide to the harmonious development, and to the due regulation of the moral nature; to point out the legitimate objects of the affections, and the different degrees of ascendancy among the desires, because the capacity and strength of the affections will be increased by the enlightenment of the mind. Accordingly, it is found among the blind, that notwithstanding their privation makes them seek social communion with others, and induces them to look more especially to the gratification of the social nature for their enjoyment than seeing people do—still, education increases this, and while it elevates the standard of choice, it strengthens the bond of attachment. When perfect too, it will teach what is not usually enough taught, the self-denial of individual enjoyment, for the sake of the common good; for one of the saddest conditions of their lot is, that all the social affections cannot be gratified without

the risk of entailment of their infirmity upon others ; and they have to learn, [and in learning may they teach others,] that let the feelings clamor ever so loudly, the voice of conscienciousness should be heard above the din.

Another interesting question arises from considering the effect of blindness upon the religious affections. The blind have been reproached with a tendency to Atheism, and the ingenious objections of blind Saunderson to the truths of religion have been often quoted.

But the result of our observation of a great number of cases has been the conviction that the blind, generally, have the religious feelings more easily developed in their minds, that they are more susceptible of religious impressions, and have a more devotional spirit, than seeing persons. This we attribute not alone to the greater sense of dependence, for that is an intellectual perception, while the first yearnings of the soul for something to adore,—the starting germs of the religious feeling—the early aspirations of the spirit, are all perceptible before there can be an intellectual perception of dependence. This seems at least to be the case with blind children, and to prove rather that the religious nature is entirely independent, and as certainly developed in a growing mind, as any other of its attributes. Be the explanation, however, what it may, the fact seems as stated above, and we shall leave to others the interesting speculations that might be constructed upon it.

Religious instruction, strictly so called, does not form part of our regular system, and the only devo-

tional exercise is, the daily reading of scriptures, with the repetition of the Lord's Prayer by the pupils.

The general course of instruction has been so often detailed in former reports, that it need not be repeated here; suffice it to say, that it has been pursued, during the past year, and we believe with satisfactory results. It is sometimes difficult to show the positive benefits which a superior education confers upon persons not destined to one of the learned professions; and the objection is not seldom urged, that it can be of little use to blind persons, since most of them must get their living by hard work, if indeed they can do so even by that. It is true that a blind person must always labor under a disadvantage in obtaining his own livelihood, and since, in the present state of things, many of the laboring class, with every sense and every faculty quickened by the pressure of want, and sharpened by competition, have difficulty in obtaining the comforts of life, how much greater difficulty must oppose the efforts of the blind man. Nevertheless, it is as clear as any truth can be, that if he cannot support himself comfortably when his intellect is enlightened, and his faculties physical and mental are trained to activity, his condition must have been much worse, had he remained in ignorance and in idleness. Moreover it is certain, that without that degree of self respect which will make him resolve to do all that in him lies to raise himself above charity, he will not make successful struggle with the odds that are against him; and this self respect cannot be born of ignorance. With it, with proper views of the dignity of labor, with habits of industry, and with

good moral character, the young blind person goes out into the world with some chance, at least, of success, and if he have friends to give him a helping hand at the outset, he may finally walk firmly alone.

Some of the pupils who have left, are now engaged in the attempt to earn their own livelihood: some by teaching and practising music; some by the exercise of handicraft work; some in other ways. Some have been supplied with tools, stock, &c., by the Institution, and are to make payment in articles of their own manufacture. Whatever may be the result of these efforts in individual cases, the good effects of their education cannot be doubted; with an enlightened mind, with a due sense of self respect, and a determination not to be a burden upon others, the blind person will grapple resolutely with the difficulties which, under the most favorable circumstances, must ever oppose his progress to independence.

These difficulties, it must be admitted, are numerous and great; more so than we ourselves formerly supposed, and we are desirous that our experience should be useful to others. Blindness necessarily precludes a person from engaging in any of the common callings of life; the farmer, the mechanic, the sailor, have constant need of eyesight. There are, however, some of the subdivisions of the mechanic arts, such as coarse weaving, braiding, &c., which can be easily performed by a blind person; but as soon as any articles, mats for instance, are found to be in demand, some contrivance is made by which steam sets iron fingers in motion, and the market is glutted. A blind man can

make excellent baskets, common brushes, brooms, &c. ; but if, having learned to do so, he goes out into the world, and tries to live by his art, he meets great difficulties. Take the manufacture of shoe brushes, for instance ; the blind man can finish an article as well as a seeing one, and get a fair living ; but the seeing man erects an establishment, where, by minute subdivision of labor, by purchasing stock in large quantities, by using the finer materials for fine articles, and taking only the refuse for shoe brushes, he throws the latter into the market at a price with which the blind man cannot well compete ; because he has no capital, he must buy in small quantities, and he must sell when his work is done, since he cannot afford to wait for a rise in the market. For some time, perhaps, he is able to dispose of his articles at a profit, because people feel desirous of encouraging him, and will trade with him on terms less advantageous to themselves than they can get elsewhere ; but this amounts to charity, and the blind man ought not to rely upon its continuance, if he could ; which, however, he cannot ; for charity and trade go not long hand in hand together. Nor has he the advantage which another workman has, who can profit by the establishment which his rich neighbor has opened, and go into it and work as long as he pleases ; for nothing about the establishment is calculated for blind persons, to whom rumbling cog-wheels, revolving bands, and whirling saws, are objects of fear and of real danger. Every thing in the workshop of the blind man should be arranged with a reference to his peculiar mode of working, and when so arranged, and on a large

scale, it will admit of that subdivision of labor, without which no permanent profit can be counted upon.

With these views, which the result of every year's experience confirms, we have endeavored to build up a department which should be considered supplementary to the Institution, and in which work could be supplied to such blind persons as are disposed to work industriously all the time; and we confidently hope it will have ultimate success. During the last year, thirteen blind persons have been employed in it, and have, most of them, earned something for themselves. The sale of articles has steadily increased, but it is not yet sufficiently great to give employment to more than a small proportion of those who can work, and are willing to work, but who cannot find employment. For a particular account of the operations in the shop, we refer to the Appendix, and merely state summarily here, that it has been a small expense to the Institution, though it has now such a start that it will not probably be so any longer. We consider the expense, however, as nothing compared to its present and prospective advantages to the blind. We would, therefore, solicit the public patronage to the establishment, believing that the articles manufactured will give satisfaction.

In addition to the inducements urged above, for the establishment of some place in which blind persons can find employment, another is to be found in the fact that blind persons who have received an education, and who cannot therefore remain quiet in a state of dependence upon friends, and who, of course, shrink from going to an alms-house, are

sometimes, from sheer necessity, obliged to resort to means, some of which are not desirable, and others are positively prejudicial to the characters of the individuals, and of doubtful benefit to the public. We will notice but two, music and lecturing, by itinerant practitioners who have not talent or acquirement enough to create an interest, or to convey instruction, but who depend upon the extraneous interest excited by the fact that they are blind, in other words, upon charity. We would speak with kindness and with due consideration of the circumstances which may have forced some to adopt these callings; but we think it a duty to raise a voice of warning on this subject.

In some parts of Great Britain, itinerant blind musicians have become a nuisance, for they are in reality vagabonds and beggars, and their peculiar infirmity procures them exemption from the treatment which others of that class would receive at the hands of the police. The multiplication of institutions for the instruction of the blind in this country, will have the effect of multiplying persons who will be able to keep themselves out of the alms-house; and as all will have some knowledge of music, and a smattering of other knowledge, some from indolence, some from want, will be apt to become itinerant musicians or lecturers, although they may be entirely wanting in the requisite qualities for those most respectable professions; indeed there are already some such in the country. We have always held, and hold still, that music should be taught to all blind persons, and that it would afford to many a reputable and profitable employment. But it should

be selected as such, only by those who have a decided talent for it, and who can, by devoting all their time and effort, attain to such a degree of excellence as will command for them positions as organists, teachers of vocal music, &c., in which they can have, what every man should have, regular and permanent occupation; for the others, it should be only a source of recreation, and occupy hours that cannot be devoted to work. The objections to incompetent blind persons adopting either of the callings above named, are two fold; first, they indirectly ask charity, they collect people who come only from vague curiosity, and they are apt to degenerate into mountebanks; second, they necessarily acquire habits of irregularity, and almost certainly of vicious tendency. They give one or two concerts or lectures, so called (by courtesy) during the week; they are just then under great excitement, but the next morning, and all the intermediate time, they are in a state of mental *collapse*; they lie late in bed, they lounge about with idle people in public houses, bar rooms, &c. Under these circumstances, and without steady employment, it would be very strange if they should escape, what so few seeing persons similarly placed ever do escape, habits of dissipation and depravity.

It is to avoid the necessity of blind persons becoming mountebanks, and to provide them with steady and honorable employment, that we would urge the provision of an establishment in which they shall have the advantages that result to seeing men from combination, from investment of capital, and from subdivision of labor; and we hope to see in

every large city in the country, such an establishment, where the industrious and skilful blind workman may be able to earn by his honest labor, enough at least to raise him above the crushing sense of dependence upon charity.

In the printing establishment nothing has been done, during the year, (for want of funds) except the work upon the Old Testament. That enterprise, of so much interest to the blind in every part of the country, has been brought to a close: the whole Bible is now stereotyped, and finished in a beautiful and permanent form. An edition has been printed on very tough paper, which will last a lifetime with proper usage; it is condensed to eight volumes, and may be had at the cost, or \$20 per per set. This work shows a very decided improvement in mechanical execution over any thing which has heretofore been finished here, or imported from Europe; while at the same time it can be afforded much cheaper; for the European Bible for the blind, which has been but recently completed is in 19 vols. and costs, delivered here, about \$40. Indeed, the American Bible, is not beyond the reach of any blind person who has learned to read, and is really disposed to study the sacred writings, for to all those, who are indigent, the Bible Society will supply a copy gratuitously. In alluding to the superiority of the execution of this work, over any we have yet seen, we speak not in a spirit of boasting, but of gratulation to others; it is the last work, and it ought therefore to have all the most recent improvements. The art of printing for the blind is new, and is still capable of great improve-

ment ; we trust it will be improved ; we wait with impatience and with hopeful anticipation for new and superior works from the progress of the kindred institutions in Philadelphia and Glasgow, which have already made valuable contributions to the library of the blind. Nor do we despair of being able yet further to advance this good work, for although the fund is now exhausted, and there is no apparent way of obtaining more, yet we trust that the liberality of old friends will be renewed, and that new friends will come forward, and our press will not be allowed to remain idle, through the coming year. Time was, when this was considered a doubtful experiment ; time was, when we raised an almost solitary voice for a library of the blind ; for it is not yet ten years, since it consisted of only a few portions of Scripture, printed by a benevolent individual ; but now, it is established beyond all question that books for the blind are sources of pleasure and profit ; they have been multiplied, but the readers have multiplied still faster ; there are now several hundreds sitting darkling in their solitary homes, and stretching out their hands to the rich and the benevolent, who can turn their darkness into light, and their sadness into joy.

Let them not wait in vain ; let it not be that when a way is pointed out by which one of the greatest of human calamities can be lightened of half its weight, no helping hand shall be found to remove it. The press of our country is teeming with books, pamphlets, and papers ; thousands of pages printed daily, are unread by any but the authors of them ; and shall not a few books be placed in the hands of

a blind child in such a shape that he can read them? Shall not a little be saved out of this vast waste to gladden his heart, and sow the seed of knowledge and virtue in his mind? We trust that it will; and that the appeal which we have often made before, and never yet entirely in vain, shall again be successful.

In the Report of the last year some general observations were made upon the statistics of blindness, and a few results were stated; a still larger collection of facts has been made by the Director, during the past year, some of which will be found in an Appendix. It may be stated more generally, that the hereditary tendency to blindness appears by them to be well established, and also that blindness is often one of the physical infirmities entailed upon children, by the parents or grand-parents who were themselves nearly related by blood.

For the financial affairs of the Institution, we refer to the appended Report of the Treasurer, which has been duly audited by a Committee of the Corporation. It may be well, however, to state here, what seems not to be generally understood, the mode of managing the finances of the Institution. The Corporation, at its annual meeting, appoints a Treasurer, who receives the funds on hand, and to whom all payments, whether from the State, or from individuals, are immediately made; he alone has charge of the funds. The Corporation appoints eight gentlemen on its part, and the Governor and Council appoint four in behalf of the State, to act as Trustees. The Board of Trustees appoint two of its members to act as auditors

of accounts. All bills are first examined by the Director, and certified by him to be correct; they are then audited by the Auditors, and entered in their books; and the Treasurer pays no bill unless it be first certified by the Director, and approved by the Auditors. At the end of the year the Treasurer's accounts are examined by a Committee of the Corporation, who compare his entries with the original vouchers, and if found correct, they are approved and submitted at the Annual Meeting. The Treasurer and Trustees have no salary, and no perquisites; the Director has a salary, but no perquisites; all other persons employed have their salaries and their board. In this way the financial affairs are simplified, and any abuse is rendered impossible except by defalcation on the part of the Treasurer, or remissness or combination among the Trustees, against which there can be no safeguard, except the character of these persons; since to require heavy bonds where the duties are not light, and where there is no salary, would be hardly reasonable.

The Steward's accounts are submitted in an Appendix; and from them it will appear that all the domestic expenses of the establishment, including board, washing, fuel, stable, &c., amount to \$6,159 37. The average number of pupils and teachers during the year has been 75, so that the cost has been \$82 12 cents for each person, one year; or \$1 57¹²/₁₃ cents per week, or 9 cents per week less than during the last year.

The Steward's department is under the immediate management of the Director, who keeps the accounts, and examines and enters all the bills. At

the end of every month, the accounts are made up, and examined, with the original vouchers, by the Auditors, and an order is drawn by them on the Treasurer for the same.

The food is plain, but wholesome, and abundant ; and the general domestic arrangements are calculated to promote the comfort and health of the inmates.

It will be perceived that the income of the Institution merely covers the necessary expenses ; and that for the greater part of that income it is entirely dependent upon the bounty of the State. Should this be withheld in part, or in whole, its doors would have to be closed, or the means of its usefulness materially lessened.

We have thus alluded in general terms to the various departments of the Institution ; and we are happy to report them in a sound and flourishing condition. For more detailed information, we refer the Corporation, and indeed all persons interested, to the appended documents, to the books, and to the Institution itself. The most thorough examination is solicited, and information will be readily afforded on all subjects.

It is necessary to have regulations with regard to the admission of visitors ; and the Institution is open to the public only on the first Saturday in each month, when an exhibition is given between 3 and 5 o'clock, P. M. But special permits can be obtained for strangers, or for persons particularly interested, without charge, by applying at the Office, No. 152 Washington Street.

We take this occasion to express our satisfaction

with the officers and teachers who have discharged their duties with fidelity and ability; and we close with recommending the Institution to the favor of the Legislature and the public.

All which is respectfully submitted.

EDWARD BROOKS,
THOMAS G. CARY,
JOHN C. GRAY,
JOHN D. FISHER,
OZIAS GOODWIN,
JOHN HOMANS,
SAMUEL MAY,
JAMES K. MILLS,
SAMUEL P. LOUD,
HORACE MANN,
ROBERT RANTOUL,
STEPHEN FAIRBANKS.

APPENDIX A.

LAURA BRIDGMAN.

GENTLEMEN,

IN drawing up an account of the progress of our interesting pupil, during the past year, I shall rather aim to give information to the general readers of our annual report, and to those numerous persons who watch with interest the progress of the experiment of her education, than to detail any new facts.

Her health has been excellent during the year, uninterrupted indeed by a single day's illness. Several medical gentlemen have expressed their fears that the continual mental excitement which she manifests, and the restless activity of her mind, must affect her health, and perhaps endanger the soundness of her mental faculties; but any such tendency has been effectually counteracted by causing her to practice callisthenic exercises, and to take long walks daily in the open air, which on some days extend to six miles. Besides, she has a safeguard in the nature of her emotions, which are always joyful, always pleasant and hopeful; and there is no doubt that the glad flow of spirits which she constantly enjoys, contributes not only to her physical health, but to the development of her mind. There is a great difference produced, even physically, by the habitual indulgence of different emotions. Let two children of quick parts be put to study—the one stimulated by emulation, by pride, and by envy, and the other by love of his parents, by regard for his teacher, and above all, by the natural relish for new truth and the delight which results from a pleasant activity of the perceptive faculties, and the difference, even in the physical effects, will, after a time, be perceptible. Ambition, envy, and pride, while they may stimulate to powerful mental efforts, are accompanied with little pleasure, and that not a healthful one; they leave behind lassitude and dissatisfaction; the child craves something more, he knows not what; but joy, that oxygen of the moral atmosphere, is generated only by the action of the generous and noble sentiments.

Laura generally appears, by the quickness of her motions and the eagerness of her gestures, to be in a state of mind which in another would be called unnatural excitement. Her spirit, apparently impatient of its narrow bounds, is as it were continually pressing against the bars of its cage, and struggling, if not to escape,

at least to obtain more of the sights and sounds of the outer world. The signs by which she expresses her ideas are slow and tedious; her thoughts outstrip their tardy vehicle, and fly forward to the goal; she evidently feels desirous of talking faster than she can; and she loves best to converse with those who can interpret the motion of her fingers when they are so rapid as to be unintelligible to a common eye. But with all this activity of the mental machinery, there is none of the wear and tear produced by the grit of discontent; every thing is made smooth by the oil of gladness. She rises uncalled at an early hour; she begins the day as merrily as the lark; she is laughing as she attires herself and braids her hair, and comes dancing out of her chamber as though every morn were that of a gala day; a smile and a sign of recognition greet every one she meets; kisses and caresses are bestowed upon her friends and her teachers; she goes to her lesson, but knows not the word *task*; she gaily assists others in what they call house-work, but which she deems play; she is delighted with society, and clings to others as though she would grow to them; yet she is happy when sitting alone, and smiles and laughs as the varying current of pleasant thoughts passes through her mind; and when she walks out into the field, she greets her mother nature, whose smile she cannot see, whose music she cannot hear, with a joyful heart and a glad countenance; in a word, her whole life is like a hymn of gratitude and thanksgiving.

I know that this may be deemed extravagant, and by some considered as the partial description of a fond friend; but it is not so; and fortunately for others, (particularly because this lesson of contentment should not be lost upon the repining and ungrateful,) she is as a lamp set upon a hill, whose light cannot be hid. She is seen and known of many, and those who know her best will testify most warmly in her favor.

The general course of instruction pursued during the past year, corresponding as it does with that detailed in former reports, needs not to be here repeated for the information of those to whom this report is immediately addressed; but as great public interest is excited in this case, and as inquiries are continually made respecting the processes by which instruction is conveyed to her mind, it may be well to explain some of them, even at the risk of repetition, and of saying what may seem to those familiar with the theory of teaching the deaf and dumb not only trite but worthless. Let me therefore say here, that should any of the theoretical views of *deaf-mutism* propounded in these reports, be deemed unsound by those better acquainted with the subject, it is to be considered that our Institution is not one whose object it is to teach deaf-mutes; the cases which have been treated of are those where mutism is complicated with blindness, and which have come under its care simply because its method of instruction seemed nearest adapted to such cases;

—cases nearly hopeless, and which, it is believed, have never before been successfully treated.

Some kind of language seems necessary for every human being; the cravings of the social nature are loud and constant, and cannot be gratified except by some medium of communication for the feelings. The intellect cannot be developed unless all the modifications of thought have some sign even, by which they can be recalled. Hence men are compelled by a kind of inward force to form languages; and they do form them under all and every circumstance. The social organ presents the natural and most perfect medium through which, by attaching a meaning to every modulation of voice, a perfect system of communication is kept up. The question whether a people could exist without language would be about as reasonable as it would be to ask whether they can exist without hands; it is as natural for men to converse as it is for them to eat; if they cannot speak they will converse by signs, as, if they had no hands, they would feed themselves with their toes. Children then, prompted by nature, associate their thoughts with audible words, and learn language without any special instruction. If you make the sound, represented by the letters *a p p l e*, when you hold up the fruit to a child, he naturally associates that sound with it, and will imitate the sound, even without your trying to make him do so; if the child be deaf so that he cannot hear the word which you speak, of course he cannot imitate it, and as such, of course, he must be forever dumb. But the desire to associate the thing with a sign still remains, and he has the same power of imitation as others, except in regard to words; if therefore you make a visible sign when you show him the apple, as by doubling the fist, the fist afterwards becomes to him the name or sign for the apple. But suppose the child cannot see the apple, suppose he be blind as well as deaf. What then? he has the same intellectual nature,—put the apple in his hand, let him feel it, smell it, taste it,—put your clenched hand in his at the same time, and several times, until he associates this sign with the thing, and when he wishes for the fruit he will hold up his little fist, and delight your heart by this sign, which is just as much a word, as though he had said *apple!* out aloud.

Reasoning in this way I undertook the task of instructing Laura Bridgman and the result has been what it will ever be where nature is followed as our guide.

This simple process is readily understood; but simple signs, and names of objects being easy enough, it is often asked, how can a knowledge of qualities which have no positive existence be communicated? Just as easily, and just as they are taught to common children; when a child bites a *sweet* apple, or a *sour* one, he perceives the difference of taste; he hears you use one sound, *sweet*, when you taste the one, another sound, *sour*, when you

taste the other. These sounds are associated in his mind with those qualities; the deaf child sees the pucker of your lips, or some grimace when you taste the sour one, and that grimace perhaps is seized upon by him for a sign or a name for *sour*; and so with other physical qualities. The deaf, dumb and blind child cannot hear your sound, cannot see your grimace, yet he perceives the quality of sweetness, and if you take pains to make some peculiar sign two or three times when the quality is perceived, he will associate that sign with the quality, and have a name for it.

It will be said that qualities have no existence, being mere abstractions, and that when we say *sweet apple*, the child will think it is a compound name for the individual apple, or if he does not do this, that he cannot know whether by the word *sweet* we mean the quality of *sweetness* or the quality of *soundness*. This is true; at first the child does *not* know to what the sound *sweet* refers; he may misuse it often, but by imitation, by observation, he at last gets it right, and applies the word *sweet* to every thing whose qualities revive the same sensation as the sweet apple did; he then uses the word *sweet* in the abstract, not as a parrot, but understandingly, simply because the parrot has not the mental organization which fits it to understand qualities, and the child has. Now the transition from physical to mental qualities is very easy; the child has dormant within his bosom every mental quality that the man has; every emotion and every passion has its natural language; and it is a law of nature that the exhibition of this natural language calls into activity the like mental quality in the beholder. The difference between joy and sorrow, between a smile and a frown, is just as cognisable by a child as the difference between a sweet apple and a sour one; and through the same mental process, by which a mute attaches signs to the physical quality, he may, (with a little more pains,) be made to attach them to the moral qualities. There is not time however in this brief report to enlarge upon this point.

Much surprise has been expressed by some who are conversant with the difficulties of the teaching, &c. of mutes, that Laura should have attained the use of verbs without more special instruction. It may be said in reply, that no minute and perfect account of the various steps in the process of her instruction has ever yet been published; and that moreover the difficulties in the use of the verbs are in reality much less than is usually supposed.

As soon as a child has learned the use of a noun, as *apple*, and of one or two signs of qualities, as *sour* and *sweet*, he begins to use them; he holds up the fruit, and lisps out, *apple—sour*, or *apple—sweet*; he has not been taught a verb, and yet he uses one; he asserts the one apple to be sweet, the other to be sour; he in reality says, mentally, "*apple is sweet apple*," or "*apple is sour apple*;" and in a little while he catches by the ear, an audi-

ble sign,—the word, *is*, and puts it in where he before used only a sign, or meant to use one. Just so with the deaf-mute; when he has learned a noun and an adjective he uses them by the help of a verb, or some mark of assertion, and you have only to give him some sign, which he will adopt just as readily as the speaking child, by mere imitation, and without any process of ratiocination. We give too narrow a definition when we say a verb is a *word*, &c. I may be wrong, but it seems to me that the long, detailed, and very ingenious process laid down in some books for teaching verbs and other parts of speech to the deaf mutes, are worse than useless; they have excited much attention, and justly received much admiration for their ingenuity, but it is of the kind we should bestow on mechanical contrivances for imitating the human voice; and it would seem to be about as wise to teach a child to talk by directing him to contract this muscle, to relax that, and to place his lips in such and such a posture, as to teach a deaf-mute the use of the different parts of speech in the manner detailed by Sicard.

But it would swell this report to a volume, should I pursue the same train of remarks with regard to the different parts of speech. Indeed I should hardly have hazarded it here had it not been for assertions, emanating from respectable sources, that this child must have some vision, or hearing, or some remembrance of oral language, since she has easily attained the use of the most difficult parts of speech, which cost so much labor to those merely deaf and dumb. It is needless to repeat what is so well known to hundreds, that she is totally deaf, and blind, and has been so from her tender infancy.

It will be observed by those who have had the patience to read the above remarks, that to the child with all his senses, the acquisition of a language, which has already been perfected by the labor of many successive generations, is an easy and pleasant task, and accomplished without any teacher; that for the deaf-mute the difficulty is increased a thousand fold; that for the deaf, dumb, and blind, it is immeasurably greater still; and that for poor Laura Bridgman it is even more increased by the fact that she has not that acuteness of smell and taste, which usually aid those in her situation, and that she relies upon touch alone. Nevertheless she goes on, joyously using her single small talent, patiently piling up her little heap of knowledge, and rejoicing as much over it as if it were a pyramid.

Before proceeding farther, it may be well to explain what was said in a former report about Laura's making a peculiar sound, whenever she meets any person, which she calls that person's *noise*; and about which many inquiries have been made; especially as an important physiological inference may be drawn from it. When she meets me, one of the pupils, or any intimate friend, she instantly makes a noise with the vocal organs;—for

one a chuckle, for another a *cluck*, for a third a nasal sound, for a fourth a guttural, &c. These are to her evidently signs, or names affixed to each person. These are known by those very intimate with her; when they speak to her of such and such an one, she makes his "noise;" and these noises or names have become so intimately associated with the persons, that sometimes, when she is sitting by herself, and the thought of a friend comes up in her mind, she utters his "noise," as she calls it, that is, what is to her his name. Now as she cannot hear a sound, as she never attempts, like deaf and dumb persons, to attract the attention of others by making a noise, it follows that, impelled by the natural tendency of the human mind to attach signs to every thought, she selects the natural vehicle for the expression of it, and exercises the vocal organs, but without any definite view of producing an effect. This would seem to prove, if indeed any proof be wanting, that men did not select vocal sounds for a colloquial medium, from among other possible media, but that it is the natural one.

It may be remarked, in this connexion, that she laughs aloud, and more naturally than most deaf persons, and that she is almost constantly doing so. This is not checked at all, although it is not always an agreeable sound, because there is some danger that her pulmonary organs may suffer for want of that natural and healthy exercise which other persons have from speaking aloud.* In romping and frolicking she becomes quite noisy, and thus obtains some exercise for her lungs.

Much attention has been paid during the year to improving her in the use of language, and at the same time to increasing her stock of knowledge. A useful exercise for this purpose has been to tell her some story, and to require her to repeat it in her own language, after she has forgotten the precise words in which it was related to her.

The following story was related to her one day:

JOHN AND THE PLUMS.

1. An old man had a plum tree, and when the plums were ripe, he said to his boy John,

2. I want you to pick the plums off my tree, for I am an old man, and I cannot get up into my tree to pick them.

3. Then John said, yes sir! I will get up into the tree and pick them for you.

4. So the boy got up, and the old man gave him a pail to put the plums in, and he hung it up in the tree near him.

5. And then he put the plums into the pail, one by one, till the pail was full.

6. When the boy saw that the pail was full, he said to the old man, Let me give you the pail, for it is full.

* I do not know what may be the statistics of mortality among deaf-mutes, but I should infer, *a priori*, that they would be more subject to pulmonary diseases than speaking persons.

7. Then the man held up his hand and took the pail of plums and put them in his cart.

8. For, said he, I am to take them to town in my cart to sell them,—and he gave the pail back to the boy to fill with more plums.

9. At last the boy said, I am tired and hot, will you give me a plum to eat?

10. Yes, said the old man, for you are a good boy, and have worked well; so I will give you ten plums, for you have earned them.

11. The boy was glad to hear him say so, and said, I do not want to eat them all now. I will eat five and take five home to my sister.

12. You may get down now, said the old man, for it will soon be dark, and then you will lose your way home.

13. So the boy got down and ran home and felt glad that he had been kind to the old man.

14. And when he got home he was glad he had been kind to his sister and kept half his plums for her.

The next day she was requested to recall it to memory, and to write it down in her Journal, and she did so in the following words:

“An old man had a large plum tree,—he had a little boy John; the man asked John to please to go up on the tree to pick many plums, because he was very old and lame. The man gave John a pail for plums. John put them in till it was very full; he said to the man, it is very full of plums. He took the pail up in his cart to sell them. John was tired and hot; he asked the man if he might take one plum. The man said he might take ten plums, because he was a very good boy to earn them hard. The man told him to hurry home. He ate five plums; he gave his sister five plums; he felt very happy because he helped the old man much, and made his sister happy. John was kind to help the old man; he was very generous to give his sister part of his plums. The old man loved John very much. If John did not hurry home he would have lost the way. John liked to help the old man well.”

It will be seen that she made some moral reflections of her own which were not expressed in the original story. It is desirable that every new word or fact which she learns should be communicated by her teachers, or that she should form a correct notion about it; but this, as will be perceived, is impossible, without depriving her of that intercourse with others which is necessary for the development of her social nature. The following extract from the journal of Miss Swift her teacher, is interesting.

Feb. 27. When I went to Laura after recess, she said, *I was very much frightened; Why? I thought I felt some one make a great noise, and I trembled, and my heart ached very quick.* She asked me if I knew any *crazy persons*, then altered it to *crazy* then to *crazy*; I asked her who gave her the new word *crazy*, she said “*Lorena told me about crazy persons, and said she was [once] crazy; What is crazy?*” I told her that crazy persons could not think what they were doing, and attempted to change the subject; but she immediately returned to it and repeated the question, *have you seen crazy people?* and would not be satisfied until I answered it. I told her I saw a crazy woman walking about; she said “*why did she walk, how could she think to walk?*” [She detected here the

imperfection of her teacher's definition.] I told her they were sometimes sick, and became crazy; she said "*who will take care of me if I am crazy?*" I laughed at her and told her she would not be crazy. She replied "*I said, if.*"* "I told her I would take care of her if she would be kind and gentle to me;" she then asked, *can I talk with my fingers; did you ever see a dizzy lady; how do you dizzy?* Laura said she dreamed last night about her mother, and the baby, and talked with her fingers, as in the day time; I questioned her particularly on what she dreamed, but could not get a satisfactory answer.

She wrote a letter to her father, and her mother, of her own accord; that to her mother was as follows:

"My dear, my Mother,

I want to see you very much I send much love to you I send ten kisses to my sister Mary. My one pair of stockings are done. Can Mary walk with her feet? Do stockings fit her? I want you to write a letter to me some time. Miss Swift teaches me. I want you to come to South Boston with my sister to stay few days and see me exercising the callisthenics. Oliver can talk with his fingers very faster about words. I will write a letter to you again. Miss J. and Dr. send love to you. Miss Davis is married, Mrs. Davis. She has gone to live with her husband in Dudley. Is Mary well? Is my aunt well? I send love to her. I will write letter to you soon some time. Why did you not write letter to me? I go to meeting every Sunday. I am gentle in Church with Miss Rogers. I am happy there.

Good bye

LAURA BRIDGMAN.

She has commenced the study of geography, during the past year, and made fair progress. Having first acquired an idea of the points of the compass, and taken some preliminary lessons by bounding her schoolroom, the chambers, entries, &c., and then going out into the premises, bounding the house and yard, she was put to a map. But it will be more interesting to give some extracts from her teacher's journal, showing how she passes her time of study, though no words can describe adequately the eagerness of her manner, and the pleasurable expression of her countenance when she gets a new idea, and turns to hug her teacher, in her glee.

Feb. 2d. She asked me if she was good yesterday; I told her yes, she had been good all the week; she said, "*did I do any little thing wrong?*" Continued the conversation on trades, and taught her the word *furniture*. When I was telling her what work milliners did, she said, "*do milliners make stockings,—milliners make stockings that have flowers on them?*" At the geography hour she asked me to teach her "*above*,"—meaning the chambers; she bounded, to-day, all the rooms on the second story, and remembered all of yesterday's lesson, without going to the rooms.

In Writing, gave her a lesson on the board; she does not succeed so well on that as Oliver. At twelve began to tell her about seeds, and told her I would talk to her about what her father did, (he is a farmer.) She said, "*how do you know what my father does? does your father do so?*" No! my father is Dr. "*Why is not my father Dr?—he gave me medicine once; was he a Dr?*" Did not succeed to-day in getting her much interested in seeds. P. M. She worked very industriously.

Feb. 3d. Gave Laura examples in numeration, in hundreds and thou-

* Let any one who has questioned the possibility of her forming a correct conception of this difficult word *if*, look at this form of expression, and find therein an answer.

sands, which she performed very well, and numerated correctly until she had the number 8,500, which she wrote 80 50; she hesitated, and said, "I think it is wrong," and enumerated; but it took her a long time to find how to alter it,—when she at length succeeded, she said, "*I was very sad not to know.*" Laura asked what cups and plates and saucers were; taught her the word crockery,—"*what are rings?*" taught her jewelry,—"*what are knives and forks?*" &c. Next she got her work box, for me to tell of what it was made; told her about the pearl with which it is inlaid, and the name of the wood,—rose; she asked, of what the doors were made; told her pine; she asked, "*why are pine apples—pine?*"—she wanted to know who made the brass hinges. She talked about her locket, and wanted to know what color it was under the glass; told her it was black,—"*how can folks see through black?*" In Geography, she bounds any of the rooms now, after a moment's thought, and seems to understand all about it; she bounded the house, with a little help; talked with her about the *Point*—but she did not quite understand it. In Writing, she does very well when practising her letters, but when she has her journal, she is very careless; she wrote to-day an account of the different trades. In the afternoon she went to the schoolroom an hour, while a number of gentlemen were there; she amused herself by asking what the denominations were after millions; at last she set down a row of types the whole length of her board, and enumerating it found it was eighty quintillions,—she asked, "*what people live eighty quintillions of miles off?*" and said, "*I think it would take ladies a year to go so very far.*"

Feb. 17th. Laura succeeded in doing five or six questions this morning. One was to find the age of a man, in which I gave her the time he had lived in several places. She said, "*he lived in many places, I am not sure, why—why?*" She asked a great many questions about the party to which I went last evening, as how the ladies knew when to come; &c.; taught her the word *invitation*; she asked, "why did I not go?" told her she was a little girl,—she said, "*Doctor says I am tall;*" but she was quite reconciled to it when I told her that the other blind girls did not go. She talked of her walk yesterday; she was much amused by walking on the snow that was crusted over, but not quite enough to bear; when she broke through, she would scream with delight, and pull me after her. She was quite puzzled to find the reason, and I told her if she would remember to ask me, I would tell her this morning.

Feb. 18th. Found, to my surprise, that Laura could bound all the towns I had taught her, *without* the map,—Roxbury, Brookline, Brighton, Watertown, and West Cambridge. I taught her, to-day, about Cambridge, Charlestown, Medford, and Malden. She was in excellent spirits, and takes more interest in this than in any other study. At twelve, took Laura to the stable, to show her oats and a half-peck measure; then to the store-room, to teach her Wine Measure; found a gallon measure and also a hogshead, tierce, and barrel. She readily learned their names, and how many gallons they would hold, and then, as usual, she wanted to go round to examine other things; let her see the coffee in a bag; sugar, salt, &c. in barrels; ginger, pepper, &c. in boxes of twenty-five and fifty lbs.; then starch in papers, and lastly she examined the tea-chest, box, lead, &c. I intended to have taken a part of this lesson on another day, but she was so much interested that I could not avoid her questions: deferred the review until another day.

Here follow some other extracts, taken from different parts of the Journal:

Wednesday. Laura practised some time in Arithmetic, but did not succeed quite as well as yesterday. She was much interested in an

Algebra type, and was very anxious to be able to use it; told her I would teach her, when she was sixteen, all about it; "and can you kiss me then?" She said, "can you kiss sixteen young ladies?" meaning young ladies of sixteen. She talked about it some time, and expressed much fear that she should have to give up kissing and being kissed when she was older.

Thursday. Commenced by telling her where Boston and Charles River were, and then attempted to give her the idea, that the map was small, and we could not have room to put on it all that was on the other map; and then of the number of miles from Boston to the mouth of the Hudson River, moving her finger from one to the other. When I had told her the distance, she said, "I think Miss W. lives there,"—and she was delighted that she had got so far from home.

At eleven, gave her for a writing lesson, the story I read to her Friday noon. She said, at first, she could not remember it, because it was long ago that I read it; but she did very well. After writing it she said, "*is this truth?*" told her I thought it was not. "Is it lie?" tried to make her understand that it was not wrong to write it, but I doubt if I succeeded entirely. When writing she spelled the word bureau wrong, and when I asked her, why? she said, "I was very *unremembered*," she knows the word forgetful, but wished to try to make one, and after she had done so she turned to me for approbation.

It has been remarked that it was very difficult in the beginning to make her understand figures of speech, fables, or supposititious cases of any kind, and this difficulty is not yet entirely overcome. If any sum in arithmetic is given to her, the first impression is that what is supposed, did actually happen. For instance, a few mornings ago, when her teacher took an arithmetic to read a sum, she asked, "*How did the man who wrote that book know I was here?*" The sum given her was this: If you can buy a barrel of cider for four dollars, how much can you buy for one dollar? upon which her first comment was, "*I cannot give much for cider, because it is very sour.*"

She formerly talked as little children do, without using pronouns, but now she uses them freely, and her appreciation of them is proved by the fact that in talking with little Oliver, who is still in the very rudiments of language, she uses the third person, and says, for instance, "*Laura is rich*," when to another she would say, "I am rich."

She has a keen relish for knowledge, which, mingled with a little self-esteem, would perhaps impel her to greater effort than would be consistent with health, if care were not taken to prevent it. One day she had been left in my library while we were gone to church; in the evening she appeared fatigued and complained of being unwell; she was asked where she had pain, and she said, "*in my head; I slept one hour to-day, and then studied very much in books, and thought very hard.*" Upon inquiry, it was found that she had got hold of a *Latin* book, printed in raised letters, and had been puzzling over it, and worrying about it.

She asked the meaning of many words which she remembered, as *sed*, *non*, *est*, &c. It was explained to her that it was in the

Latin language, upon which she asked if "*the Dr. knew Latin;*" if "*Sophia knew Latin;*" and learning that some others were as ignorant of it as herself, she was comforted. She understands that different nations use different languages, and was very much pleased at learning a few words of French.

Words are to her always signs of something definite, and are taken in their literal sense; for instance, she supposed for some time after hearing about the generic word *smith*, that blacksmiths were all *black* men, and silversmiths *white* men. Like other blind persons, she forms an idea, (vague, of course,) about colors; she thinks that black is a dirty color, and that the ground is black; another says that black is rough, while white is smooth, &c.

If she is told the name of a person, as Mr. Green, or Mr. Brown, it excites a smile, or an expression of surprise. So when she meets a name, as *Ox-ford*, or *Ply-mouth*, she discovers a sense of the ludicrous in the unwonted use of the term *ox*, *mouth*, &c.

She continues as formerly to form words analogically: for instance, having learned the word *restless*, she said one day when she felt weak, "*I am very strongless.*" Being told this was not right, she said, "*why you say restless when I do not sit still.*" Then, thinking probably of adjectives formed from nouns by adding *ful*, she said, "*I am very weakful.*"

Her insatiable curiosity often leads her to discourse about things, the full comprehension of which is far above her reach; and it is difficult to confine her mind to one point. If you are talking to her about lead, for instance, she will want to know about lead pencils, what would be the effect of eating it, about shot; then about birds, why killed, &c. &c. Talking about Houses she asked "*where did men live before wood was made, and without floors?*" Answer, in caves and caverns; "*How many years did men live in caves?*" No precise answer could be given, and she continued by asking "*where did they live before caverns?*"

This ignorance of many things which are familiar to other children, causes her sometimes to appear childish in conversation. For instance, walking in the streets, she felt the ground tremble as a fire-company rushed by, and being told that some one's house was on fire, and men were running to help him put it out, she asked, "how do they blow?"—thinking they blew it out as one does a lighted candle; and on an attempt being made to explain that the fire was quenched by water, she asked, "why do not man put it out himself?"

At other times her home questions manifest shrewdness, and show that she will not be put off with the simple affirmation of others. Her teacher talking with her one day about her doll, told her it could not feel; that flesh and skin had feeling, but not kid and wax. "*But,*" said she, "*why cannot man make flesh doll?*" Where would he get his flesh was the answer. "*Take*

from cow," said she. Immediately afterwards, talking of horses, she said, "*did you ever pat your father's horse on face?*" Yes! "*Was he happy?*" Yes! "*Did he smile?*" No! "*Then how did you know he was happy?*"

But I might fill a volume, (and perhaps I may, some day, for it would be useful to children at least,) were I to dwell upon the interesting particulars of the intellectual instruction of this child. I proceed, therefore, to some considerations more immediately connected with her moral nature.

It is a remarkable and most gratifying fact, that she adopts and follows with greater readiness and facility any regulation founded upon what may be called natural minor morals, than one based upon mere arbitrary, social conventionalism. She does not forget or violate any rule of conduct in which the feelings or rights of others are concerned; indeed, she hardly seems to need them; but she is apt to forget such a rule as that one should not rise from the table until others have done eating.* Being once told, two years ago, that it was disagreeable to others to have her blow her nose at table, she has never violated the request since, but invariably gets up, and leaves the room for that purpose; while such a rule as that of using a fork instead of a knife, or of shaking hands with a person, would have to be repeated many times over.

As to cleanliness, modesty, sobriety, &c., she needs no instruction; she is always clean in person, and neat in dress; and the slightest exposure will call the blush to her cheek. She eats heartily, and often, but never over much, and drinks but very moderately the simplest beverage. She sometimes seems to be so full of animal spirits that it is difficult for her to sit with quiet or decorum; and if the weather be bad, and she cannot work off her excitement by exercise, she becomes nervous, or, as we call it to her, *rude*. In her teacher's journal, I find the following: "Laura had a *nervous* day, and lost part of her lesson. Talking about some things she had done in the morning, she said, "*What made me very rude?*" I told her I did not know; she said, "*I think I did not feel good in heart;*" asked her why? she replied, "*because I broke a door knob this morning;*" I asked her if she felt good now; she replied, "*I cannot feel good until I learn to be good.*"

She seems to be one of those who have the law graven upon their hearts; who do not see the right intellectually, but perceive it intuitively; who do good not so much from principle as from instinct; and who, if made to swerve a moment from the right by any temptation, soon recover themselves by their native elasticity. For the preservation of the purity of her soul, in her dark

* It may continually occur to the reader, that she has no means of perceiving things which I refer to, as passing in her presence; but her sensibility is so great that hardly any thing can occur in a room without her getting some idea of it. At table she always contrives to find out how many people there are; she knows when they have done eating; she can even perceive the slightest jar made by drumming on the table with the fingers or a fork. These things are so familiar that one forgets to explain them.

and silent pilgrimage through time, God has implanted within her that native love of modesty, thoughtfulness, and conscientiousness, which precept may strengthen, but could never have bestowed; and, as at midnight and in the storm, the faithful needle points unerring to the Pole, and guides the mariner over the trackless ocean, so will this principle guide her to happiness and to Heaven. May no tempter shake her native faith in this, her guide; may no disturbing force cause it to swerve from its true direction!

As yet, it has not done so, and I can recollect no instance of moral obliquity except under strong temptation. I recall now one instance of deliberate deception, and that I am bound to confess, with sorrow, was perhaps attributable to indiscretion on my part. She came to me one day dressed for a walk, and had on a new pair of gloves which were stout, and rather coarse. I begun to banter and tease her, (in that spirit of fun of which she is very fond, and which she usually returns with interest,) upon the clumsy appearance of her hands, at which she first laughed, but soon began to look so serious and even grieved that I tried to direct her attention to something else, and soon forgot the subject. But not so poor Laura; here her personal vanity, or her love of approbation, had been wounded; she thought the gloves were the cause of it, and she resolved to be rid of them. Accordingly they disappeared, and were supposed to be lost; but her guileless nature betrayed itself, for without being questioned, she frequently talked about the gloves, not saying directly that they were lost, but asking if they might not be in such or such a place. She was uneasy under the new garb of deceit, and soon excited suspicion. When it reached my ears, I was exceedingly pained, and moreover doubtful what course to pursue. At last, taking her in the most affectionate way, I began to tell her a story of a little girl who was much beloved by her parents, and brothers and sisters, and for whose happiness every thing was done; and asked her whether the little girl should not love them in return, and try to make them happy; to which she eagerly assented. But, said I, she did not, she was careless, and caused them much pain. At this Laura was excited, and said the girl was in the wrong, and asked what she did to displease her relations; I replied, she deceived them; they never told her any thing but truth, but she one day acted so as to make them think she had not done a thing, when she had done it. Laura then eagerly asked if the girl told a fib, and I explained to her how one might tell a falsehood, without saying a word; which she readily understood, becoming all the time more interested, and evidently touched. I then tried to explain to her the different degrees of culpability resulting from carelessness, from disobedience, and from intentional deceit. She soon grew pale, and evidently begun to apply the remarks to her own case, but still

was very eager to know about "*the wrong little girl*," and how her parents treated her. I told her her parents were grieved, and cried, at which she could hardly restrain her own tears. After a while she confessed to me that she had deceived about the gloves, that they were not lost, but hidden away. I then tried to show her that I cared nothing about the gloves, that the loss of a hundred pairs would be nothing if unaccompanied by any deceit. She perceived that I was grieved, and going to leave her to her own thoughts, and clung to me as if in terror of being alone. I was forced however to inflict the pain upon her.

Her teachers and the persons most immediately about her, were requested to manifest no other feeling than that of sorrow on her account; and the poor creature going about from one to another for comfort and for joy, but finding only sadness, soon became agonized with grief. When left alone she sat pale and motionless, with a countenance the very image of sorrow; and so severe seemed the discipline, that I feared lest the memory of it should be terrible enough to tempt her to have recourse to the common artifice of concealing one prevarication by another, and thus insensibly get her into the habit of falsehood. I therefore comforted her by assurances of the continued affection of her friends, tried to make her understand that their grief and her suffering were the simple and necessary consequences of her careless or wilful misstatement, and made her reflect upon the nature of the emotion she experienced after having uttered the untruth; how unpleasant it was, how it made her feel afraid, and how widely different it was from the fearless and placid emotion which followed truth.

It was easy enough to make her see the consequences which must result from habitual falsehood, but difficult to give her an idea of all the moral obligations to be truthful; perhaps however the intellectual perception of these obligations is not necessary to the perfect truthfulness of a child, for such is his natural tendency to tell the truth at all times, that if his education can keep him from the disturbing force of any strong temptation, we may count upon his speaking straight-forward, as surely as we may calculate upon a projectile moved by one force, going in a straight line.

Words are the natural and spontaneous representations of the thoughts; the truth is ever uppermost in the mind; it is on the surface, it is a single object, and cannot be mistaken; but for a lie, we must dive below the surface and hesitatingly fetch up one of the many that may be found at the bottom. There is little fear of Laura's losing that character for ingenuousness and truthfulness which she has always deservedly possessed.

There is more fear of her becoming vain, for it is almost impossible to prevent her receiving such attentions and such caresses as directly address her self-esteem. Some persons only

feel, they never think ; and they do a benevolent action to gratify some spontaneous impulse of their own, or to give momentary pleasure to another, rather than to promote his real welfare ; and even some mothers seem to think more of the pleasurable gratification of their own blind feelings of attachment, than of the good of their children. Such persons, coming in contact with Laura, will contrive in some way by caresses, or by gifts, to show their peculiar interest in her. She is very sagacious ; she ascertains that such visitors to the school are more interested in her than in her blind companions ; and that they remain near her most of the time. It is difficult to prevent them making her presents, and in various ways showing her marks of sympathy which she may attribute to some peculiar excellence of her own. Then she must be allowed to visit, to have acquaintances, and to converse with all people who come in her way and who have learned the manual alphabet of deaf-mutes ; in short, to run the risk of the disadvantages of society, in order to secure its obvious and indispensable advantages ; and it will require constant care and vigilance to prevent her perceiving herself to be a lion, than which hardly a greater misfortune can befall a woman. That she has been so effectually preserved from this thus far is owing to the watchful care and almost constant attendance of her teachers ; and now that by the liberality of individuals she has the entire time and services of a young lady of great intelligence who is devotedly attached to her, it is to be hoped that she may long preserve her present amiable simplicity of character.

The various attempts which I have made during the year to lead her thoughts to God, and spiritual affairs, have been, for the most part, forced upon me by her questions, which I am sure were prompted by expressions dropped carelessly by others ; as God, Heaven, Soul, &c., and about which she would afterwards ask me. Whenever I have deliberately entered upon them, I have done so with caution, and always felt obliged by a sense of duty to the child to make the conversations as short as possible. The most painful part of one's duty is often where an honest conviction forces one to pursue a line of conduct diametrically opposite to that recommended by those for whose superior talents and wisdom one has the greatest respect. It is said continually, that this child should be instructed in the doctrines of revealed religion ; and some even seem to imagine her eternal welfare will be periled by her remaining in ignorance of religious truths. I am aware of the high responsibility of the charge of a soul ; and the mother who bore her can hardly feel a deeper interest in Laura's welfare than I do ; but that very sense of responsibility to God, and that love which I bear to the child, forces me, after seeking for all light from others, finally to rely upon my own judgment. It is not to be doubted that she

could be taught any dogma or creed, and be made to give as edifying answers, as are recorded of many other wonderful children, to questions on spiritual subjects. But as I can see no necessary connexion between a moral and religious life and the intellectual perception of a particular truth, or belief in a particular creed, I see not why I should anticipate what seems to me the course of nature in developing the mental powers. Unaided by any precedent for this case, one can look only to the book of nature; and that seems to teach that we should prepare the soul for loving and worshipping God, by developing its powers, and making it acquainted with his wonderful and benevolent works, before we lay down rules of blind obedience.

Should Laura's life be spared, it is certain that she can be made to understand every religious truth that it may be desirable to teach her. Should she die young, there can be no doubt that she will be taken to the bosom of that Father in Heaven, to whom she is every day paying acceptable tribute of thanksgiving and praise, by her glad enjoyment of the gift of existence. With these views, while I am ready to improve every opportunity of giving what she seems to need, I cannot consent to attempt to impart a knowledge of any truth for which her mind is not prepared; and I would take this opportunity to beseech those friends of hers, who differ from me, and who may occasionally converse with her, to reflect, that while the whole responsibility of the case rests upon me, it is unjust in them to do,—what they may easily do,—instil into her mind notions which might derange the whole plan of her instruction.

The following conversation, taken from my minutes made at the time, will give an idea of the course of her thoughts on *spiritual* subjects. During the past year, one of our pupils died, after a severe illness, which caused much anxiety in our household. Laura, of course, knew of it, and her inquiries after him were as frequent and as correct as those of any one. After his death, I proceeded to break it to her. I asked her if she knew that little Orin was very sick. She said yes. He was very ill yesterday forenoon, said I, and I knew he could not live long. At this she looked much distressed, and seemed to ponder upon it deeply. I paused awhile, and then told her that "Orin died last night." At the word *died*, she seemed to shrink within herself,—there was a contraction of the hands,—a half spasm, and her countenance indicated not exactly grief, but rather pain and amazement; her lips quivered, and then she seemed about to cry, but restrained her tears. She had known something of death before; she had lost friends, and she knew about dead animals, but this was the only case which had occurred in the house. She asked about death, and I said "when you are asleep does your body feel?" "*No if I am very asleep.*" Why? "*I do not know;*" I tried to explain, and used the word *soul*;

she said "*what is soul?*" that which thinks, and feels, and hopes, and loves, said I, to which she added interrogatively, "*and aches?*" Here I was perplexed at the threshold, by her inquiring spirit seizing upon and confounding material and immaterial processes. I tried to explain to her that any injury of the body was perceived by the soul; but I was clearly beyond her depth, although she was all eagerness to go on. I think I made her comprehend the difference between material and spiritual operations. After a while she asked, "*where is Orin's think?*" It has left his body and gone away? "*Where?*" To God in Heaven. She replied, "*where? up?*" [pointing up.] Yes! "*Will it come back?*" No! "*Why?*" said she. Because his body was very sick and died, and soul cannot stay in a dead body. After a minute she said, "*is breath dead? is blood dead? your horse died, where is his soul?*" I was obliged to give the very unsatisfactory answer that animals have no souls." She said "*cat does kill a mouse, why? has she got soul?*" Ans: "animals do not know about souls, they do not think like us." At this moment a fly alighted upon her hand, and she said, "*have flies souls?*" I said no. "*Why did not God give them souls?*" Alas for the poverty of her language, I could hardly make her understand how much of life and happiness God bestows even upon a little fly!

Soon she said, "*can God see, has He eyes?*" I replied by asking her, can you see your mother in Hanover? "*No!*" but, said I, you can see her with your mind, you can think about her, and love her. "*Yes*" said she; so, replied I, God can see you and all people and know all they do; and He thinks about them, and loves them, and He will love you and all people if they are gentle and kind and good, and love one another. "*Can He be angry?*" said she; No! He can be sorry, because he loves all folks, and grieves when they do wrong;" "*Can He cry?*" said she. No! the body cries because the soul is sad, but God has no body; I then tried to make her think of her spiritual existence as separate from her bodily one; but she seemed to dislike to do so, and said eagerly, "*I shall not die;*" some would have said she referred to her soul, but she did not, she was shrinking at the thought of physical death, and I turned the conversation. I could not have the heart to give the poor child the baneful knowledge before I had prepared the antidote. It seems to me that she needs not the fear of death to keep her in the path of goodness."

It would have been exceedingly gratifying to be able to announce a more perfect development of those moral qualities on which true religion is founded; but it was hardly to have been expected; those qualities are among the last to develop themselves, and are of tardy growth; we could have *forced* them out perhaps by artificial culture, but that would have been to have obtained a hot house plant instead of the simple and natural one that

is every day putting forth new beauties to our sight. It is but thirteen years since Laura was born ; she has hardly *lived* half that number, yet in that time what an important mission has she fulfilled ! how much has she done for herself, how much has she taught others ! deprived of most of the varied stimuli furnished by the senses, and fed by the scantiest crumbs of knowledge, her soul has nevertheless put forth the buds of the brightest virtues, and give indication of its pure origin, and its high destination.

Respectfully submitted,

S. G. HOWE.

APPENDIX B.

OLIVER CASWELL.

This blind and deaf-mute boy is now 13 years old, and his progress during the past year in the acquisition of language and of other knowledge has been very gratifying. He has been perfectly docile and obedient; and is one of the most sweet-tempered affectionate boys I have ever known. Since the first desperate resistance which he made to authority, he has never shown the slightest hesitation or even disinclination to do whatever I have required him to do, and he has also been obedient and respectful to those who have any authority over him. It may seem difficult to conceive how he should know those persons; but he does know them, and cannot be imposed upon by his fellow pupils.

He is rather lymphatic in temperament, and has by no means that rapidity of thought and action which characterises Laura in so remarkable a degree. But though very quiet in his deportment and slow in all his movements, his smiling and intelligent countenance gives him an interesting appearance, and his thick-set frame indicates strength and endurance. The most remarkable trait in his character is his affectionate and cheerful disposition. He is a favorite throughout the house; every one loves him; every one gives him a kiss or caress on meeting him; and he greets all with smiles in return. He is uniformly cheerful, and seems to have that enjoyment of existence which characterises Laura, though unaccompanied by the keen zest that makes her buoyant, while he is only calm.

He does not manifest his affection for others by those active demonstrations which she is constantly making. It does not seem a necessity of his nature to unburthen himself by kisses and caresses to others; but he is evidently pleased at receiving them. And though he seldom returns them, still he is evidently deeply attached to many of the persons about him, and manifests his love and sympathy by natural language which cannot be mistaken.

A great deal of time has been spent during the last year in communicating to him a knowledge of that indispensable requi-

site for the development of mind, arbitrary language; and he has profited much thereby. He acquires words slowly, and uses them slowly, but takes great pleasure in both processes, and has already made a considerable acquisition of words. For instance, here are some of his sentences as he made them early in the year. Wishing to inform his teacher that he had been out fishing with two persons, he said, "*Oliver, fish, boat, Thomas, Bradford.*" Pointing out to his teacher a rat hole in the wainscot he said *eat rat*. Having made a little boat and rigged it with sails, he put it into a trough of water, and, blowing too hard, overset it, which he related to his teacher thus—*Water, boat, Oliver, blow, fall*. Wishing to express the fact of witnessing a person sawing and cutting wood, he said, "*wood, saw, Thomas;*" and "*wood, axe, cut, Thomas.*" The slaughtering of the pig which he had been made to comprehend before he came here, and which was referred to in the last report, seems to have made a strong impression on his mind. One day he wrote down of his own accord "*Pig, fall, knife, cut, leg, Oliver,*" which I interpret; the Pig fell down cut by a knife, and he, Oliver, used his legs, and ran away.

The following extract from his teacher's journal shows the ease with which verbs are taught. July 15—"tried to make Oliver familiar with the use of a verb in connexion with adjectives. He asked for a cracker, I went with him to get one, and told him "cracker is round;" he smiled and nodded his head, as much as to say, I understand it. Afterwards he applied it to other things of himself saying "button is round, ball is round, &c." My former plan was to go on step by step, and give the different parts of speech separately, beginning with nouns, but reflection has convinced me this was wrong. Whenever the deaf-mute indicates through natural signs, assertion, negation, interrogation, quality, &c., then is the time to give him the corresponding arbitrary signs or words, which he by mere imitation, and without requiring any explanation, immediately adopts.

When he was taught that persons have two names, he was very much interested and went on to ask the second name of all the members of his family, as John Caswell, Richard Caswell, &c.; but afterwards asking the family name of one of his school mates, which happened to be Caswell, he was sorely perplexed, and much of the value of the lesson was necessarily lost from inability to explain to him the apparent violation of a rule which he seemed himself to have established. He also inquired what was the second, or family name of cat, dog, &c. One of his exercises is when alone to put down words and sentences by inserting metallic types in the form of pegs into a board pierced with holes to receive them. He can write quite well with a pencil, but this method of putting down words with types is better, inasmuch as it enables his teacher to make him correct his own sentences. He generally puts down the words in what is probably the most

natural order, placing the one of leading import first, as *Jacket, Oliver, give, mother* : that is mother gave me (Oliver) the jacket : the jacket,—the principal object ; to him,—the second ; given,—the third ; by his mother,—the fourth. Having been drawn upon a sled on the snow, he said “*ride, Oliver, sled, snow, rope, Thomas* :” that is Oliver rode on a sled on the snow, the rope held by Thomas : and *fall, Oliver, sled, snow, rope, Thomas* ; that he fell from the sled on the snow, the rope being drawn by Thomas ; the word significative of the leading idea coming first in each case. One chilly day he perceived that the dog was wet, trembling with cold ; and on his teacher saying to him interrogatively, *Walk* ? that is, will you go to walk, he said, *walk, no, rain* ; and added, *shake, cold, dog*.

Like Laura, and like all children, indeed, he is very fond of using new words ; his teacher having explained to him the word *hurry*, he amused himself during the rest of the day by saying *hurry* to every one he met, and pushing them along to show them how to hurry. Having learned a word, he easily and of his own accord makes various applications of it. For instance, having learned the use of the verb *is*, when his teacher caused him to shut the door, and then to spell door *shut*, he added, *door is shut*. He then took up an umbrella, and made signs to know what the cover was called, and being told, cloth, he said, “*umbrelia is cloth*.” Having fallen over a sled, and hurt his leg, he said to his teacher, “*Oliver, hit, fall, leg, sled, hurt ; leg sore ; Oliver blind* ;” that is, I hit, in falling, my leg against the sled, and hurt it ; my leg is sore ; I was blind.

He is much inclined to frolic, and sometimes tries to excite laughter by saying extravagant things ; as, “*house can laugh*”—and then laughing at it himself ; rolling a button on the floor and saying, “*button can walk*.” He seems to understand readily that mere play is intended, when one holds him over a place from which he might fear to fall, or when one tells him any thing extravagant ; but is inclined to put implicit reliance on what is said in an ordinary way. For instance, when I had gone away, to be absent, as he was told, for two nights, but returned the next day, his teacher said to him, “*Doctor has come* ;” he replied, “*No ! Doctor will come after one* ;” that is, after one night more : but, being again told I had come, he seemed troubled, and replied emphatically,* and with a look of reproof, “*No ! Doctor will come after one night ; Rogers not know !*” He understands when words are to be taken interrogatively, by a peculiar manner of using them, and will answer affirmatively or negatively. For instance, his teacher said to him a few days ago, “*Did Oliver go with Bradford to see sister ?*” “*Yes*.” “*When ?*” “*Yester-*

* Deaf-mutes may be said to talk *emphatically* with their fingers ; and it is very easy to perceive when Laura or Oliver wish to lay stress on particular words.

day," said he. He makes this visit weekly, and on a particular day, and said, "*Oliver will with Bradford after five nights;*" that is, will go with Bradford after five nights. Being asked, to see who? he replied, "*Sister.*" He has learned to count pretty correctly as far as fifty but he always *fives*, (as the old form of expression is,) that is, counts his fingers; if he is counting leaves, for instance, and finds eighteen, he will hold up both hands, with the fingers spread out, then one hand with the fingers, then one with three fingers. His progress, however, is slow in this as in other studies.

We have never had occasion to give him any lessons on propriety, either as to personal decency, or moderation in eating; and yet in both respects his conduct is not only unexceptionable, but, as I think, remarkable. He is a very moderate eater, and chews his food very deliberately. He does not crave so much as most other children, but is fond of odors, especially of flowers; and the pleasure which he derives from visiting a green-house seems almost equal to that obtained by persons with all their senses. He has a sense of property, and though not particularly acquisitive, asserts his right to his own, while he always respects the rights of others.

I have said that he is cheerful and affectionate. There have been very few exceptions to this in his conduct. He has rarely shown marks of temper, and only when he had been teased or imposed upon, or thought he had been, and then he becomes passionate, and seems bold as a little lion. There is much maunliness about him, and he takes great delight in those exercises which require strength and activity. In our gymnasium he is one of the strongest and most expert performers, leaping the bars, clambering the ropes, and swinging himself about in the air, with entire fearlessness. When injured, he bears it bravely; rubs the part injured, and conceals his emotion, or, if a tear is forced out, it is unaccompanied by a groan. He has a very strong frame, and is seldom ill; but when any thing ails him, he drops his head, sits quietly, or goes to bed, without any whining or any complaints. Sometimes, when he is grieved by a friend going away, he seems to be full of emotion, which, however, he conceals, though the tears sometimes trickle down his cheeks. He seems perfectly truthful and conscientious, though I am sure no one ever gave him any lessons upon the necessity of being so. Finally, without that remarkable degree of mental activity which makes Laura so apt a learner, he is in every respect a most interesting and beautiful boy, and it cannot be doubted that, by long and close perseverance in the course of instruction which has been adopted for him, his mind will be developed, and he will become an intelligent and happy man. S. G. HOWE.

APPENDIX C.

JULIA BRACE.

This deaf blind mute, who became so widely known during her long residence at the excellent Institution for Deaf Mutes in Hartford, has been with us since April, 1842. It will be remembered that in the last Report a brief notice was made of her, though she had then been a pupil only a few weeks, and that much difficulty was anticipated, not in making her understand the connexion between arbitrary signs and things, and not in imparting to her a knowledge of many external relations, qualities, &c. which she did not possess, but from her want of interest in learning. She has, however, rather agreeably disappointed us in that respect, and she has kept up her interest in her new studies to the present time, being always pleased to learn a new word; but, unfortunately, she cannot remember the words any length of time. This is the natural result of the long inactivity of her brain, and of her having passed the age when the perceptive faculties are vividly and almost spontaneously at work.

Following nearly the same course with her as with Laura and Oliver, she was taught to make the letters of the alphabet with her fingers, by taking articles having short names, as hat, pen, pin, &c., and putting the fingers in a particular position for each letter. These positions of the fingers thus became to her not three letters of the alphabet, but a triple sign for the object. Increasing the number of the objects, of course she gradually learned all the letters of the alphabet. She learned to combine these signs or letters in various ways, and can ask for many things, as mug, cake, bread, &c., but she does not like to do so if she can make herself understood by her old and imperfect signs.

She has learned to use the metallic types with letters upon their ends, and can put down many words: for instance, her teacher gave her a piece of cake and spelled the words, *Julia*, *cat*, *cake*; after which *Julia* of her own accord went to her board and set up the words with her types, *Julia*, *cake*, *eat*.

She was out one day this winter with the girls and her teacher frolicking on the snow. The day after she was in great glee at the recollection of it, and seemed by her sign, to try to recapitu-

late the events, and in her eagerness spelled on her fingers, "*st fall snow*;" *st* is an abbreviation of a persons name who was with her, and to whose fall on the snow she evidently alluded. It is perfectly obvious, therefore, that there was no natural incapacity for language, and that she might learn it now but for the long inactivity of her faculties, and for her possession of certain vague signs by which she can express some of her animal wants; for as to intellectual expressions she has none. Whether at her age,—and from the limited advantage which she can derive from instruction,—her guardian will consider it expedient to increase the necessary expense of the slow and tedious process of communicating knowledge to her, is very doubtful.

As much has already been published concerning her, I shall not swell this report by dwelling longer on the case.

S. G. HOWE.

APPENDIX D.—ABSTRACT OF THE TREASURER'S REPORT.

Dr. Perkins Institution and Massachusetts Asylum for the Blind, in account with Peter R. Dalton, Treasurer. Cr.

<i>Amount of various bills paid for the year 1842.</i>					
To Steward's Department, -	6159 37	By balance on hand, 1st January, -	266 55	61 22	
" Salaries of Officers and Teachers, -	3470 49	" do. do. Interest, -	110 49	377 04	
" Carpenter and Mason work, -	446 78	" do. do. State of Maine, -	762 01		
" School Apparatus and Musical Instruments, -	112 90	" do. do. Vermont, -	654 75		
" Insurance, -	176 80	" do. do. New Hampshire, -	300 00		
" Printing Reports, -	503 12	" do. do. Connecticut, -	969 35		
" Medicines, -	30 96	" do. do. South Carolina, -	160 00		
" Stationery, -	63 91	" do. do. Massachusetts, -	9265 31	12111 42	
" Truckage and Omnibus, -	30 94	<i>Extraordinary Receipts.</i>			
" Clothing indigent pupils; for Leaders, Post Office, &c., -	207 98	" amount received of Donations to the printing fund, -	117 00		
	11203 25	" amount received of other Donations, -	315 00	432 00	
<i>Extraordinary Expenses.</i>					
" Printing Department for binding Books, -	164 75				
" Carpenter and Mason work, for laying drain, &c., -	113 16				
" Expense of a Journey South with Pupils for exhibition, -	293 00				
" Expense preparing Census Return, -	79 50				
" Balance on hand, -	650 41				
<i>Memorandum of property owned by the Institution.</i>	1128 02				
Certificate of U. S. Loan, -	1036 18				
Nine shares in N. England Bank, -	900 00				
	12981 63				
		Balance brought down, -		12981 68	
				\$1128 02	
		1843, Jan'y 1.			

OFFICERS
OF THE
CORPORATION,
FOR 1843.

PRESIDENT,
PETER C. BROOKS.

VICE PRESIDENT,
THOMAS H. PERKINS.

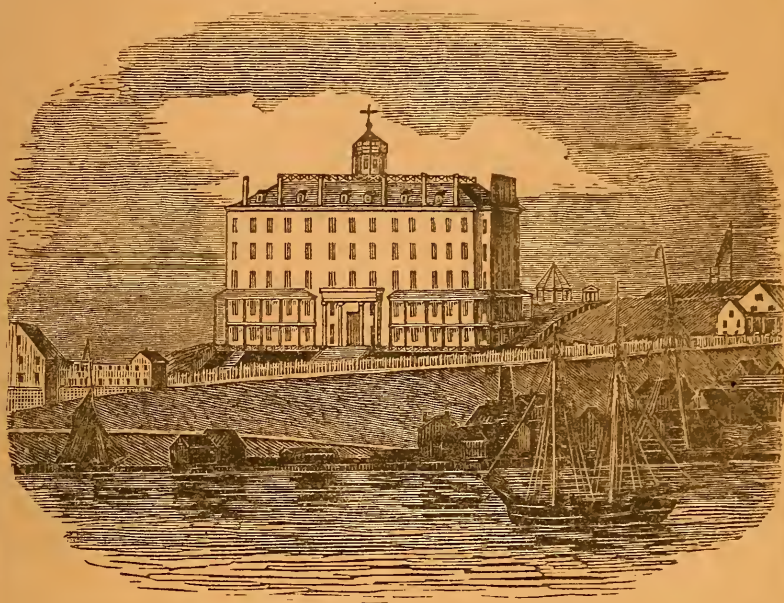
TREASURER,
PETER R. DALTON.

SECRETARY,
SAMUEL G. HOWE.

TRUSTEES,	
EDWARD BROOKS,	} <i>In behalf</i>
THOMAS G. CARY,	
JOHN C. GRAY,	
JOHN D. FISHER,	
OZIAS GOODWIN,	
JOHN HOMANS,	
SAMUEL MAY,	} <i>of the</i>
JAMES K. MILLS,	
SAMUEL P. LOUD,	
HORACE MANN,	
ROBERT RANTOUL,	
STEPHEN FAIRBANKS,	
	} <i>Corporation.</i>
	} <i>In behalf</i>
	} <i>of the State.</i>

with Mr. C. Goodwin's Regatta

THE
PERKINS INSTITUTION
AND
MASSACHUSETTS
ASYLUM FOR THE BLIND.



ANNUAL REPORT
OF
THE TRUSTEES.
1844.

DUTTON AND WENTWORTH'S PRINT.

Charles
41

TWELFTH

ANNUAL REPORT

OF

THE TRUSTEES

OF THE

PERKINS INSTITUTION

AND

MASSACHUSETTS

ASYLUM FOR THE BLIND,

TO THE

CORPORATION.

BOSTON :
DUTTON AND WENTWORTH'S PRINT.

1844.

ANNUAL REPORT.

TO THE MEMBERS OF THE CORPORATION.

GENTLEMEN :

The period has arrived when it becomes our duty to render to you an account of the administration of the Institution which you committed to our charge last January.

In April last, soon after the publication of the Annual Report for 1842, the Director, Dr. Howe, asked and received permission to be relieved from his duties for the term of one year. He had labored hard and with success for ten years in building up the Institution, and by his unremitting exertions in your behalf for so long a period, he had injured in some degree his physical constitution. Under these circumstances it seemed but just that we should grant his request. With the approval of the Board he left the Institution, and on the first day of May, 1843, he sailed for Europe.

From letters which have been received from Dr. Howe since his absence, it appears that there has been no decline of ardor on his part in the cause of those for whose amelioration he has been so long and so honorably engaged. Eleven years have elapsed, since, by your authority, he visited Europe for the purpose of an examination of the modes of instructing the blind in the schools there established. During this period many improvements have doubtless been made in the art of communicating instruction to this class of persons. Of the value and importance of these improvements no one is better prepared, and better able to judge, than Dr. Howe ; and, when he returns, the benefit of his observations will be fully experienced by our Institution, and other kindred ones of our country. In his intercourse with the instructors of the blind in foreign countries during his present visit, he will impart to them a knowledge of whatever improvements have been made in the process of educating the blind in our own land ; and it affords us no small degree of pleasure to reflect that thus some adequate return will be made for benefits received.

Since the absence of Dr. Howe, the general interests and direction of the Institution have been carried on by one of the Trustees, while the more immediate charge of the internal arrangements has fallen under the direction of Mr. Hach, our instructor of music, who, by his long residence in the Institution, is well qualified for the increased duties of his station.

There has not been in consequence of this change of presiding officers any material change in the management of the establishment, but the general prin-

ciples already adopted have been faithfully carried out ; and it gives us pleasure to add, that all things have gone on harmoniously, and that nothing has occurred to interrupt the usual course of administration.

At the close of the year 1842, as was stated in the Annual Report, the number of blind connected with the Institution was sixty-eight. During the past year twelve of these have left, and nineteen new pupils have been received ; so that at the present time the number under our charge is seventy-five, showing an increase of seven, and a greater number of inmates than have ever been in the Institution at any one period. Large as the number of fresh admissions have been, compared with that of any former year, it would have been still larger, if the Legislative grants made for the education of the blind, had not been expended on pupils already in the Institution from two of the neighboring states, and thus prevented the reception of any more from these states till the newly elected Legislatures come together ; when, we doubt not, new and increased appropriations will be made by them, sufficient, we trust, to enable every blind person in the State, of the proper age, and possessing the requisite qualifications, to enter our school.

We have stated above that the number of blind now connected with the Institution is seventy-five. From sickness and other causes six of these are now absent, leaving the present number sixty-nine. Of these, fifty-seven are in the schools, and the remainder are engaged in the work department. These school pupils are from the following states, viz : thirty-five are

from Massachusetts, six from Maine, two from New Hampshire, seven from Vermont, two from Rhode Island, three from Connecticut, and two are from South Carolina. Of those engaged in the work department, being seventeen in number, seven belong to Massachusetts, three to Maine, five to New Hampshire, one to Vermont, one to Connecticut. These, by the facilities afforded them by the Institution, are enabled to support themselves wholly or in part, and some of them to accumulate and lay aside something for their future benefit.

The course of instruction in the schools, the hours of study, and the time devoted to music, have been in all respects the same as in past years ; and we are happy in believing that the progress made by the pupils in their respective studies has been as satisfactory as heretofore.

A general change has, however, taken place in the aspect of the school rooms, as will readily be noticed by you ; first, with regard to the age of the pupils, and secondly, with regard to their intellectual acquirements. This change has arisen from the dismissal, or change of employment during the year, of a number of the older pupils, who had reaped such benefit as to render a longer stay in the school unnecessary, and the reception of many of a more tender age in their places.

All of the new pupils, as has always been the case, came under our care, not only ignorant of the simplest elements of education, but also with minds wholly undisciplined, and with physical constitutions more or less impaired by the indulgence of habits, originating from a mistaken fondness on the part of

their guardians at home. The obstacles to improvement thus presented can only be overcome by persevering attention and careful watching on the part of their instructors.

To the eye of the occasional visitant the intellectual character of the school department is not, therefore, of so high a standard as it was one year since; but this must be looked upon as a fortunate circumstance for the Institution and the pupils themselves. For, being at so early an age brought under a regular and proper course of physical, intellectual and moral culture, the precepts inculcated will sink more strongly into their minds, and as good seed is sown before the tares have had time to take root, the harvest will be more abundant, and of a purer and better quality. But when the pupil commences his education at a more advanced age, his habits of body and mind are in a measure established; and not seldom are deep rooted prejudices to be overcome before the mind expands sufficiently to perceive that the discipline pursued is for its ultimate good.

Without some cultivation, the mind will ever remain in a dormant and infantile condition; and it is only by presenting to it the proper stimuli, that it can be made to acquire strength. As the body requires exercise for its development, and will decline unless it be taken, so it is with the mind. Forgetful of this truth, and fearing to intrust their beloved child to the care of strangers, parents are in the practice of keeping their blind children too long at the family fire-side, and until both their physical and mental powers are enfeebled by mistaken indulgences.

We would, therefore, encourage and urge parents

to commence the education of their blind children at the earliest possible age, at home, and not keep them back from receiving the advantages of institutions established for their exclusive benefit, to so late a period as has been done heretofore.

It is a fact, that the young blind learn to read in an actually shorter period than most seeing children ; and so perfectly convinced of this are many parents who are in the habit of visiting the Institution, that they frequently express their determination of blind-folding their own children, and teaching them by the blind or raised letter alphabet.

Such expressions are of course made in sport ; but still there is philosophy in them. From our knowledge of the comparative progress made by blind and seeing children in the art of reading and in Geography, we are disposed to believe that the sense of touch is as useful as that of vision in acquiring these branches of education ; and that seeing children, by employing the sense of touch and of sight at the same time, would both learn to read and to master Geography more readily and more accurately than they now do by the aid of sight alone.

The use of the maps, and other apparatus of the blind, for the purpose of teaching the seeing, would be an interesting experiment, and one which might lead to important results in regard to primary education in common schools.

Several of the new pupils who are yet under eight years of age, and who have been under instruction only a few months, are already able to read with considerable facility, and have made some proficiency in arithmetic and music. The older and more ad-

vanced scholars have made honorable attainments in the higher branches of knowledge, and show a capacity for them, which proves that the loss of vision does not debar them from wandering in the loftier pursuits, but that even here the path of wisdom lies plain before them.

In this connection it gives us much satisfaction to state that another of our pupils, John M. Sturtevant, of Rochester, Mass., having been prepared for the University, has been admitted a member of Dartmouth College, and such was his capacity, that he was readily entered at an advanced standing.

The health of the pupils during the year, has, with a few exceptions, been uniformly good. A few cases of acute disease have occurred, one of which proved fatal. Betsey Smith, of Nantucket, aged fifteen, was suddenly attacked with croup in July, and died after a few hours of severe suffering, which no medical treatment could relieve.

This young girl was an object of deep commiseration while living, and much anxiety was felt for her future well-being in life. She was an orphan, and had no relatives to care for her. Her mind had been blunted in consequence of epileptic fits, to which she was frequently subject, and the prospect was that the occurrence of the attacks would finally result in idiocy, had the kind hand of Providence not stricken her down at an early age. This has been the only instance of fatal termination of disease that we have to record. Would that it were the only instance of mortality that has happened to cast a gloom over our household the past year. Death has, indeed, but seldom visited our blind family, and when it has cut

off one of our number, a warning voice has preceded its fatal shaft. Disease, more or less protracted, has been its cause. But, within the year, we have been called to mourn over the loss of one whose death was caused by accidental drowning. The pupil who was thus suddenly removed from us was John Develin, an intelligent and interesting lad, eight years old, belonging to Charlestown, in this state.

On the morning of the fourth of September, this lad and a number of other pupils were conducted to the beach in the rear of the house to bathe, which is their daily practice in the warm season. Eight minutes are allowed them to indulge in this luxury, and before this time had expired, it was discovered that the unfortunate youth had disappeared. It was supposed that he must have sunk immediately after entering the water, from some sudden affection of the brain or stomach. His body was soon found in shallow water, and every possible effort was made to resuscitate the lifeless corpse, but all in vain, for the spirit, which once animated it, had departed forever.

This occurrence, of so sudden and painful a nature, produced a most profound sensation. It was the first fatal or even serious accident that had ever happened among the pupils, and it cast a sadness and a gloom over the sympathising circle, which could not for a long time be dissipated.*

It might be expected that the blind would be par-

* One other death occurred in the house during the year. Louis Parez, an amiable lad from the State of Georgia, arrived at the Institution in August, for the purpose of becoming a pupil; but, before he had an opportunity to enter on a course of instruction, he was attacked by epileptic fits, to which he had often been subject, and died after a few hours of suffering.

ticularly liable to accidents, from the eagerness and fearlessness with which they engage in the physical exercises. They run, jump, climb trees, coast on their sleds, and go through all the usual gymnastic performances, fearless of danger, and seldom meet with harm, because they use with so much firmness the organs of locomotion, and are more guided by the influence of caution than seeing children are.

The almost uninterrupted health the pupils have hitherto enjoyed, is to be ascribed to the regulations of the Institution, founded upon the laws of hygiene. Cleanliness, a regular diet, regular and stated hours for study and for recreation, for work and repose, are by these laws strictly enjoined, and, under the direction of the officers and teachers, are faithfully enforced. By obedience to these laws, the amount of sickness among the ninety inmates has not, during the whole year, equalled that commonly met with in a small family in the city in the same space of time. This exemption from disease may in no small degree, also, be attributed to the information that has been imparted to them, and will continue to be, on the subjects of the preservation and promotion of health.

The introduction of no study has been more gratifying to the pupils, or attended with more really beneficial results, than that of Anatomy and Physiology, as applied to health, upon which subjects instruction has been given to a class of the older and more advanced scholars. In our opinion, a knowledge of their own frames, and of some, at least, of the functions going on in their bodies, should be taught to children generally at an early age. It is a

study which can be made as interesting as any other, and certainly no one can surpass it in importance. The saying is an old one, that a sound mind cannot exist in an unsound body, but the practice resulting from this truth has been greatly neglected in the education of the young.

Were every pupil, on leaving school, conversant with the laws of health, and the construction and functions of his own frame, as he might be ; and were he taught to appreciate the value of this knowledge, a revolution would soon be effected in the physical and mental condition of the community. The frightful number of premature deaths would be diminished, the prevalence of hereditary diseases would receive a check, and the duration of life would be increased many years.

The blind, especially, need this kind of instruction, and it is to be hoped that it will be the constant object of Institutions to give it to them, believing, as we do, that no greater boon can be conferred on them, than in teaching how to promote and maintain at all seasons, in every climate, and at each epoch of life, the integrity of their physical constitution.

For a knowledge of the financial concerns of the Institution, we refer you to the Treasurer's account, which is appended, and which has been duly audited by a committee appointed for the purpose.

From this it will be seen that the ordinary expenditures are about the same as the last year, while the extraordinary are very large. This outlay has been occasioned principally by a loan to the work department of some two thousand dollars, by the painting of the house, and other necessary repairs.

The house, out-buildings, and fences have been thoroughly painted and put in complete order, so that no farther expenditure upon them will be required for some years.

This work was rendered necessary in order to protect the structures from the violence of the storms : the old paint had in many places been washed away, and the parts beneath were suffering from exposure, so that, to guard against farther and more serious injury, the painting was requisite.

Among the extraordinary *receipts*, will be noticed one item of twelve thousand dollars from the bequest of the late Jacob Tidd, Esq., of Roxbury. This sum constitutes a portion of the legacy left by this gentleman to our Institution. The remainder will probably be paid over by the executors during the present season. The whole amount of the legacy, it is anticipated, will reach the sum of sixteen or seventeen thousand dollars. Although the sum stated has been placed to the credit of the Institution, yet no increase of pecuniary benefit has as yet resulted from it ; for, from the want of some secure investment, it now lies idle, and will remain so until some satisfactory measures can be adopted with regard to it.

The gentleman who thus displayed his interest in the welfare of the blind, also bestowed some portion of his wealth upon the seeing, and gladdened the heart of the fatherless orphan and friendless child by his donation to the Farm School. The bulk of his property he divided among the bereaved ; those deprived of the sense of sight, and the destitute, have reason to bless his memory.

For the support, therefore, of the Institution, whose

expenses must necessarily increase with the increase in the number of pupils, we must rely, as heretofore, upon the bounty of the states ; and, from the satisfactory results which have thus far attended the education of the blind, we doubt not their bounty will be showered with even a more liberal hand, so as not only to continue those now with us, but to throw open the doors to all who wish to come. Appropriations of this kind are bread thrown upon the waters, and will ere long prove to be profitable investments to the states which make them.

The results of the work-shop during the past year have been in the main quite satisfactory. The reasons which led to the establishment of the work department, and the objects expected to be gained by it, have been stated in the previous reports. Seventeen of the inmates have been employed in the shop, and have been engaged mostly in the manufacture of mattresses, and they have all found sufficient employment to cover their expenses, and some of them have laid up small sums.

The number of private orders for the making of new mattresses, and for the making over and repairing of old ones, has grown more numerous, in consequence of the satisfaction always given, and the knowledge that the word of the Trustees is pledged, that none but the best materials shall be made use of. By pursuing this line of conduct steadily in all the transactions, the business of the work shop has regularly increased, and we trust that it will continue to increase, until the department shall support itself, and yield a living profit to those for whose benefit it was established.

In the printing department nothing has been done since the completion of the great work, the Bible for the Blind. The press has remained idle during the year. This has arisen solely from the want of funds ; for this branch relies for its support upon funds independent of the Institution. Such a complete exhaustion of means for the support of this department is the more to be regretted, because scarcely a week passes without applications for books being received from the blind, not only of this State, but from those of other States of the Union, and also from persons in Europe. It is to be hoped that private munificence will yet enable us to resume our occupations in this particular, and that the press, which has already issued so many valuable and standard works for the blind, will not be suffered to remain longer unemployed. Works of a permanent character are greatly needed ; text books in many different branches, which, when once printed, will continue to be used as standard books for years.

Having thus spoken of the progress of the Institution during the past year, and described at sufficient length the present condition of its various departments, we cannot bring this Report to a close, without more particularly detailing the progress which has been made in the education of two of our pupils. The two referred to are Laura Bridgman and Oliver Caswell, both of them deaf, dumb, and blind, and who, by their unfortunate condition, have excited the sympathies of the philanthropists, while the details given in former reports have been sufficient to turn the eyes of metaphysicians throughout the world to watch their progress.

During the past year a marked change has taken place in the condition of Laura, of such a nature as to render apparent to those around her, that her thoughts and feelings are becoming more matured. Her physical strength, which was formerly but feeble, has gradually and steadily increased, so that she is now, for one of her constitution, quite robust. The length of her daily walks would prove fatiguing for many of our young ladies even to think upon ; for she usually walks at least six miles with no appearance of weariness, as it is her common custom to remain standing for the remainder of the evening. How far her habit of leaning heavily upon the arm of her teacher, in her promenades, may contribute to remove this sense of fatigue, may be a matter for question ; but thus relying, her step is firm, and her manner perfectly fearless when she walks.

With this increased strength of constitution, her nervous disposition has undergone considerable change ; her outbreaks of laughter, and bursts of expression, are no longer so sudden and violent.

It will be remembered that when she came to the Institution she was destitute of the sense of smell, and that her sense of taste was also imperfect, a natural result of the loss of the former sense. With regard to these senses, there has been, in some respects, a manifest improvement during the past year. She seems now like one acquiring the sense of smell, and with this sense that of taste has evidently advanced.

She has never, however, been known to apply any article to her nose for the purpose of forming a more

accurate judgment respecting it, as Oliver Caswell and many of the blind pupils are in the habit of doing.

As evidences of her increased power in the sense of smell, it may be mentioned that she has repeatedly distinguished in the room over the kitchen the odor of roasting meat. When seated at table, also, she has been seen, after having partaken of one dish, to inspire like one engaged in smelling, and then to request to be helped from some dish of the presence of which she had been kept ignorant.

In *language* she has made rapid progress during the past year ; and such is her present advancement, that she now acquires a dozen new words, at least, where she before learnt only one. These words are not merely the names of tangible and sensible objects, but even words more obscure in their meaning.

One method pursued by her teacher has been to read a story to her, in the course of which new words would occur ; these were carefully explained, and on the next day Laura has been able to tell the story in her own language, frequently using the words explained, and in proper connexion.

The long words please her most, and are most used by her afterwards. From this circumstance, and because she associates so much with adults, the language used by her partakes more of the adult character than is common with young persons of her age. Her vocabulary of words, when compared with that of children of twelve years of age, in full possession of their faculties, may be considered equally copious, but more matured.

With the words she has learnt she is perfectly familiar ; and, in conversation and writing, she never

falters in selecting those which exactly express the thoughts she wishes to convey. She spends a portion of each day in writing in her journal, in which she notes every little circumstance which transpires in the Institution that comes to her knowledge. She also is in the frequent habit of writing letters to many persons who have opened a correspondence with her. It is an exercise in which she takes much pleasure.

In addition to instruction in language and in writing, she has during the year been studying Geography and Arithmetic. As stated in the last Annual Report, she had just commenced these studies.

With regard to Geography, she had, a year since, acquired a definite and accurate notion of the points of compass, and of territorial boundaries, and had learnt the boundaries of the city, and a few of the neighboring towns.

The plan pursued in teaching her this science was alluded to in the last Report, and is one which the seeing would do well to follow. Laura was first taught the points of compass in a room, then the boundaries of the room. She next learned the geography of the house, and of the grounds on which it is situated. Having advanced thus far, the effort was made, and with success, to present to her mind an accurate idea of points of land, capes, bays, harbors, and rivers, by taking her to walk in places near them. A further step was made, when she became acquainted with the boundaries of South Boston, after which she was permitted to learn the boundaries of the city proper by crossing its bridges. Gradually and slowly was she taught the Geography of one town after another, till she became acquainted with all of any

note in the State of Massachusetts, as indicated on the map. She is now able to bound all the States in the Union; can tell their principal towns, the rivers, their rise, course and termination, the productions, the natural curiosities, and much of the natural history of each state, in a manner more correct than most seeing children of her own age, or older. Her knowledge of Geography is not limited to the United States. She has studied that of North and South America, and her knowledge of the whole of the American Continent is far more extensive and correct than is possessed by many who are called educated persons.

Being taken a few days since to a large globe, and the Russian possessions in North America pointed out to her, she was able without hesitation, so accurate was her judgment of geographical position and distance, to place her finger at once upon Boston, a mere point on the surface of the globe, and not larger than the head of a pin. This was the first time she had ever been taken to the globe for the purpose of instruction.

During the hour devoted to Geography, her instructor, by way of amusement, has occasionally told her something of Astronomy. As an instance of the accuracy of her calculations, and the retentive character of her memory, when the length of the year of the planet Herschel was explained to her, she burst into a fit of laughter, and said, how *very young* the Doctor would be if he lived in that planet.

In Mathematics one great advantage, at least, has been gained. Her former repugnancy to mental arithmetic has been in a great measure overcome by

the assiduous attention of her teacher. A year ago she had attained a certain degree of acquaintance with numbers. Since then she has been taught in Colburn's Mental Arithmetic, which she appears to comprehend as readily as most children of her age ; and solves the most difficult questions it contains by the mental effort only. Twenty, thirty, and even forty of the sums, are the usual number which she performs in an hour's lesson. Having now thoroughly studied and comprehended this work, she will be instructed in one of a more advanced character.

In her moral conduct, Laura has uniformly exhibited those beautiful traits which have ever distinguished her. Her love of truth, perceptions of right and wrong, and detestation of deception, are daily exemplified in her life and action.

Oliver Caswell, who, like Laura, is deaf, dumb, and blind, has been with us now a little more than two years. During the last year his health has been uniformly good. He is still the favorite ; winning and attracting all, both playmates and teachers, by his gentle disposition, his artless simplicity, and quiet, happy manner. As heretofore, the great object has been to give him a knowledge of language, and his progress during the year has been rapid. He now comprehends the precise meaning of a very large number of words, and has the power to use them in composition.

A year ago he was unable to connect words, or form a sentence, but expressed himself in the following manner. Wishing to say that he had been out fishing with Thomas and Bradford in a boat, he thus expressed himself:—" Oliver, fish, boat, Thomas,

Bradford.” And it should be remarked, that at that period he was constantly in the practice of using the third person for the second, and had no knowledge of the use of conjunctions and prepositions, and other minor particles of speech. To show the improvement which he has made in the use of language, the following letter, written by him to Dr. Howe on the 28th ult., is here introduced.

“ My Dear Dr.

Do you take gun put powder and ball, go quick shoot bird fall in water dog Marco go in water carry give to you bird meat to eat dinner? How old are you? Are you well? When you will come to see J. ? I want to see you. Man will bring letter to me. I am fourteen years old. I am fifty-six inches high. I am heavy eighty-two pounds. Rogers and I did ride to see mother six nights ago. I have bell and hammer. I and with Bradford up stairs. I find bell on floor. Bradford give bell to me. I make noise ring bell. Boys and men and ladies and girls all go in room Smith party one hundred. Good bye.

OLIVER CASWELL.”

With his increased acquisition of language he has gained a great deal of knowledge of external objects. For, in explaining to him the meaning of a new word, his teacher has always accompanied the explanation with an account of the nature, appearances, and uses, of the object represented by the new word ; and this practice would often lead to inquiries on the part of Oliver, which related more or less to his immediate lesson, and which his teacher has ever endeavoured satisfactorily to answer. By such means he has become acquainted with a multitude of things,

—as trees, plants, animals, and generally of such objects as he could feel, or taste, or smell.

He has also made considerable proficiency in Arithmetic; but this is a study he is not fond of. Writing is rather a favorite amusement with him; and he has improved so much, that he now writes a very legible hand, one that any person can read. He frequently writes to his mother, and other persons. His memory is very retentive; and, having once learnt a thing, he seldom forgets it. His desire for learning increases with the instruction given, and his capacity for intellectual acquisition becomes daily more and more apparent.

In addition to the remarks that have been made in relation to the blind, a few words must be said with regard to the two deaf and dumb children who joined our school about a year since, at the early age of seven years. Being too young to be admitted into the Asylum for the Deaf-mutes at Hartford, they were placed by their parents under our direction, with the hope that they might, at least, gain a knowledge of language at an earlier period than has been usually the case with children in their condition. The success which has attended the plan of instructing Laura by the finger language alone, has induced the instructor of these two deaf-mutes, to teach them language only by the finger process, intentionally avoiding the use of the gesture language taught at Institutions for the Deaf and Dumb. And, thus far, the plan, as in Laura's case, has been satisfactory. It is found that these children not only learn to talk rapidly with the fingers, but are able to form a precise idea of a sentence expressed by the

finger language, which cannot always be the case in the use of their natural, or gesture language ; and in this important particular does the manual, or finger language, seem to be of greater value to the deaf-mutes than the language of gesture. But besides being able to communicate their ideas more precisely and accurately by the fingers, the deaf-mutes, unquestionably, by practice, can also convey them more rapidly than by their natural language. Laura certainly talks with her fingers much more rapidly than the most expert penman can write ; and this may be done by every deaf and dumb child at a much earlier age even than they are now placed under instruction. These two children have been under the charge of the same lady who devotes herself to Oliver ; and, in consequence of the attention bestowed on them, although so young, they have made considerable progress, not only in the acquisition of language, but also in writing, numerical calculations, and in a knowledge of objects which attract their notice.

In connexion with this subject it should be mentioned, that during the last session of our State Legislature, the Committee on Education appointed by that body, consulted our Board on the subject of admitting the deaf and dumb to enjoy the privileges of our Institution. A consideration of this proposition was urged and encouraged by parents of deaf-mute children, and also by educated deaf-mutes, who were anxious to have the education of their unfortunate brethren commenced at an earlier age than was permitted by the regulations of the American Asylum, at Hartford, and at a school nearer than that at Hartford. The subject being carefully and deliberately

weighed by us, and the probable advantages and disadvantages of the change strictly canvassed, we came to the conclusion, that the admission of both classes of these bereaved, would prove mutually beneficial. In consequence of this conviction in our own minds, the committee who sought our views, were informed that if the State Legislature would authorize us to educate the deaf-mutes, or such of them as were yet too young to be permitted to enter the school in Connecticut, they should be admitted into our institution on the same footing with the blind.

The question, we understand, was discussed at some length by the committee, in the presence of a deputation from the Asylum at Hartford, who protested against the proposed change, and it finally resulted in the arrangement, that the regulations of that Asylum should be so altered, as to authorize the admission of our state deaf-mute beneficiaries at an earlier age than heretofore. Whether the subject will ever again be agitated rests entirely with the State Government.

Having thus examined, at some length, the various points of interest connected with the Establishment, we are satisfied, and happy in the conviction, that its progress during the past year has been ever onward and upward.

Its present condition is such as to carry out in all respects the desires of its benevolent founders ; and there has been no weariness on the part of the officers and teachers to instil into the minds of the pupils such principles, as will render them happy and useful beings even in their desolation.

Eleven years have now elapsed since the Institution

first started with four pupils, in a small rented house, with such apparatus, and in so small a quantity, that the recollection of it excites a smile. Since that time it has sent forth into the world more than an hundred educated minds. One of our former pupils is at the head of a blind Institution, another is an assistant teacher, another, with his seeing wife, conducts a private seminary for the instruction of young ladies, two are in College, some are successful teachers of music, and many, with more or less success, are pursuing their handicrafts; and thus they are scattered throughout the land, as living evidences of what can be done for the Blind.

In consequence of the successful results attending this first effort in our country to enlighten the blind, for our Institution was the first incorporated, five other Institutions of a similar character have sprung up in various States of the Union. In their success we feel a peculiar interest, for we are all struggling in the same path, the endeavour to restore to the bosom of society, to make glad the family hearth-stone, by bringing within their genial influence, the mind debarred from all light by its natural and wonted channels.

From its humble origin, our own Institution has arisen to the spacious and commanding situation it now occupies, with its grounds for exercise, and its health-giving sea-breeze; from its four pupils, its number has increased to the average of seventy, and the public confidence in all it does is yet increasing.

To our absent Director, Dr. Howe, much of this unparalleled success is due; and the present is the first opportunity, during the long lapse of ten years,

which his absence has afforded us to express, as far as our feeble words can do, the sense of deep obligation we are under to him. Indefatigable in the pursuit of knowledge upon this particular branch, undaunted by obstacles, he has gone steadily and successfully onward in his labors on your behalf.

Very respectfully submitted.

EDWARD BROOKS,
 THOMAS G. CARY,
 JOHN D. FISHER,
 JOHN C. GRAY,
 OZIAS GOODWIN,
 JOHN HOMANS,
 SAMUEL MAY,
 JAMES K. MILLS,
 SAMUEL P. LOUD,
 HORACE MANN,
 ROBERT RANTOUL,
 STEPHEN FAIRBANKS.

ABSTRACT OF TREASURER'S ACCOUNT FOR 1843.

Dr... Perkins Institution and Massachusetts Asylum for the Blind, in Account with P. R. DALTON, Treas....Cr.

<i>Amount of various bills paid for the year 1843.</i>			<i>Ordinary Receipts in 1843.</i>		
To Steward's Department, - - - -	6238 10		By Balance on hand, January 1, -	-	1128 02
" Salaries of Officers and Teachers, -	4651 98		" Amount received of pay Pupils, -	462 25	
" Carpenter and Mason work, - - -	635 36		" " " Interest, -	116 16	578 41
" School Apparatus and Musical Instruments, - - - -	296 83		" State of Vermont, - - - -	1249 56	
" Insurance, - - - -	176 80		" " New Hampshire, - - - -	500 00	
" Printing Reports, - - - -	156 65		" " Connecticut, - - - -	209 00	
" Advertising, - - - -	85 00		" " South Carolina, - - - -	160 00	
" Medicines, - - - -	28 86		" " Massachusetts, - - - -	9772 45	
" Stationery, - - - -	39 20		<i>Extraordinary Receipts.</i>		
" Trunkage and Omnibus, - - - -	34 76		" Amount received of Donations to the Printing Fund, - - - -	240 94	
" Clothing, Leaders, Post Offices, and sundry expenses, - - - -	413 11	12,756 65	" Do. other Donations, - - - -	552 12	
<i>Extraordinary Expenses.</i>			" Do. Legacy Mr. Tidd, - - - -	12000 00	
" Printing Department, Binding, &c.	66 12		" Do. Dr. Howe's pay as member, -	92 50	
" Cleaning Vaults, - - - -	73 00		" Do. for sale of Books, - - - -	192 61	13,078 17
" Painting House, - - - -	747 53				
" Expense of Journeys to Maine with Pupils, - - - -	93 50				
" Expenses for Private Pupils repaid, -	195 09				
" Loan to Shop, - - - -	2073 63				
" Balance on hand, - - - -		3248 87			
		10,670 09			
		<u>\$26,675 61</u>			
<i>Memorandum of Property standing in Name of Institution.</i>					
Certificate U. S. Loan, - - - -	1036 18				26,675 61
Nine Shares N. E. Bank, - - - -	900 00				
	<u>\$1936 18</u>		1844		
			Jan. 1, By Balance, - - - -		\$10,670 09

OFFICERS
OF THE
CORPORATION,
FOR 1844.

PRESIDENT,
PETER C. BROOKS.

VICE PRESIDENT,
THOMAS H. PERKINS.

TREASURER,
PETER R. DALTON.

SECRETARY.
SAMUEL G. HOWE.

TRUSTEES,	
EDWARD BROOKS,	} <i>In behalf of the Corporation.</i>
THOMAS G. CARY,	
JOHN D. FISHER,	
JOHN C. GRAY,	
OZIAS GOODWIN,	
JOHN HOMANS,	
SAMUEL MAY,	} <i>In behalf of the State.</i>
JAMES K. MILLS,	
SAMUEL P. LOUD,	
HORACE MANN,	
ROBERT RANTOUL,	
STEPHEN FAIRBANKS,	

THE
PERKINS INSTITUTION
AND
MASSACHUSETTS
ASYLUM FOR THE BLIND.



134. ANNUAL REPORT
OF
THE TRUSTEES.
1845.

EASTBURN'S PRESS.

THIRTEENTH
ANNUAL REPORT
OF
THE TRUSTEES
OF THE
PERKINS INSTITUTION
AND
MASSACHUSETTS
ASYLUM FOR THE BLIND,
TO THE
CORPORATION.

BOSTON:
1845.
EASTBURN'S PRESS.

R E P O R T .

TO THE MEMBERS OF THE CORPORATION.

GENTLEMEN :

WE have the pleasure of laying before you the following Report of the history and condition of the Institution during the past year.

The number of inmates reported in January, 1844, was seventy-five, a larger number than that of any former year ; since then there have been six discharged, and thirteen admitted, so that the actual number is eighty-two.

The usual course of intellectual studies, of music, and of handicraft work has been followed during another year ; and has gone on quietly and uninterruptedly. Death has not entered the dwelling, nor has there been any epidemic or any case of severe disease to mar the happiness, or disturb the general quiet of the household.

The bounty of the Legislature has been continued ; the growth of public esteem, has been shown by the increasing number of visitors ; the friends of the Institution have manifested their good will in various ways ; and one who has gone where there are

no more earthly ills to be removed, has made us stewards of a fund which he himself could no longer have the happiness of dispensing.*

We, and all connected with the Institution, should be unworthy such favors, if the recollection of them, did not fill us with grateful joy, and urge us to still greater efforts to deserve their continuance.

The principal event in the history of our little community, is the erection of a new workshop. This was done by raising the walls of the north-west wing of the main building, and making such changes in the wing itself, as gives larger and more commodious rooms to the work people, and enables them to carry on their business without disturbing the school. The arrangements have just been completed, and that department has been put on a better footing than it has ever been before.

We have been led to take this step by the conviction which has gradually been forced upon us during the experience of ten years, that most of the blind must abandon the hope of earning a livelihood by any easier way than that of handicraft work ; and that many of those even who betake themselves to, this will always need the help of an establishment to furnish them with work.

The most difficult thing in the management of a school for the education of the Blind is to adopt that course of instruction which will prepare the greatest number for being useful in society and for earning their own livelihood. It seems clear enough that the great majority must depend upon their hands,

*We allude to the legacy of \$5,000 by John Parker, Esq.

but in exactly what way, it is difficult to say. It might be thought that the duty of the Institution to its pupils was finished when, like other youth, their moral and intellectual nature had been developed by proper training, and by study of the common branches of school instruction; when they had been taught to read, write, cypher, to understand geography, history, and to play tolerably upon a piano forte. This would be the case, if, like other youth they could readily find a place in the world which they could fill with advantage to themselves and to others; but, unluckily for them, all the professions, all the arts, all the callings of men are adapted for those who have eyes, and almost every post has duties which require the use of sight. In this respect, even the deaf mutes have a great advantage over the blind; there is much of the work of society which can be done just as well without hearing as with, but there is very little which can be done without sight. The compensating power derived from greater acuteness of the other senses, may indeed do much, and great familiarity with work may do more; a blind man may learn to make very good coarse shoes, but he cannot compete with those who by minute sub-division of labor can work so much cheaper than he can; and if he seeks employment in a common shop, he finds nothing adapted to his peculiar way of working.

We have always considered it essential to make the pupils devote a part of their time to some simple handicraft, so as at least to give them manual dexterity, and train them to habits of work: but this is a part of education in which they take less delight than in intellectual pursuits and music. See-

ing children have usually to be urged to their lessons; the blind have often to be held back from too severe mental application. Many of them absolutely hunger and thirst for knowledge; the voice of an instructor is never unheeded; they catch with greedy ears what falls in conversation; they listen with intense interest to the reading of newspapers or books; some of them would go on all day long with study forgetful of exercise or recreation, and if nature should flag at night, the sound of music would arouse them to keen delights which they would fain enjoy until morning. They have generally much mental activity; for they cannot well exhaust the nervous energy, and fatigue the body during the day so completely as other youth do; hence it is hard to get them off to bed at night, and not difficult to arouse them to study early in the morning. Our school commences about six o'clock, A. M., and there are seldom any laggards. This fondness for study is perhaps owing somewhat to the method of instruction, but, probably, more to other causes already alluded to.

We believe that in all similar schools there is a kind of pressure exerted by the blind to extend as much as possible the time devoted to intellectual instruction and to music, and to diminish that devoted to work. They exert this pressure so generally, and so steadfastly; their plea, the love of study, and the love of music, is so honest and so earnest; their ingenuity at finding objections to work which may injure the niceness of their touch is so keen and so wakeful, that, with the desire naturally felt of conforming as far as possible to their wishes, it is very

hard to insist upon much manual labor from them while young. Sometimes, and more especially in this country, the blind are indisposed to devote themselves to a life of labor, by motives, which, though they are the natural consequences of their condition, are less praiseworthy.

The dignity of labor is not yet appreciated by society; and the blind are not to blame if they regard it as those about them do—the last thing to be resorted to for a livelihood. Nay! the blind are more liable to this error of judgment than others, on account of some of the peculiarities of character caused by blindness. The ordinary effect of any physical infirmity is to disturb the harmony of our moral nature by causing the thoughts and feelings to revolve too much about self. One's own condition, wants or sufferings, monopolize too much of the thoughts, so that instead of living as we should in the normal state of health, almost without consciousness of having a body, we have this consciousness forced painfully upon us until, like an object held near the eye, it shuts out a wide field of vision. If the infirmity be of a nature to excite contempt or mirth on the part of the thoughtless, the effect is to sour the temper and contract the sympathies, but not to lessen the self esteem, (a man may be very short and very crooked without disturbing his self complacency.) Deafness followed by mutism necessarily contracts the circle of the social affections and relations, for human art lags fearfully far behind nature in providing the means of an interchange of thoughts and feelings; hence it will be found that the mutes are less affectionate, and less cheerful;

but they have perhaps less of self esteem than the blind. The blind person challenges sympathy at once, and always receives it: the blind child is the object of peculiar attention at home; he is the lion of the house, not only while he is the baby, but he is both the lion and the baby as long as he continues young. His case proves that the receiver is less blessed than the giver; he receives more services than all the rest of the children of the house, while he can return but few; he is an object of general attention; he is regarded as a curiosity in the neighborhood, and he sometimes comes at last to consider those services a tribute due to his merit, and those attentions as a sign of his own importance. Hence the disposition of the blind to overrate themselves; a disposition which is rather their misfortune than their fault, since it grows almost necessarily out of their physical infirmity.

We have alluded to it in this connexion to explain the reluctance of some of the blind to adopt handicraft work as the business of their lives; a reluctance which arises from their participating in the too common prejudice in society respecting the comparative merit of different callings.

Another reason which disinclines some to manual labor, is the aversion which they have to active bodily effort; and this leads us to consider one of the physical peculiarities consequent upon blindness, viz: that there are few, if any, who as they grow up to manhood, develop an active nervous or fibrous temperament; there are very few among them who would be selected by a physiognomist as likely to become active and energetic men. We allude not

merely to the lack-lustre countenance, but to the very structure of the body and head ; they have not the strong knit frame, the marked outline of feature, the thick black hair, or other marks of such temperament.

We speak, of course, of those who were born blind ; of whom it may be said further, that there is among them a smaller proportion of clever children than among the seeing. This fact would be naturally inferred from what we have said in a former Report.*

Blindness is sometimes a mere symptom, or local effect of some general cause which affects unfavorably the whole physical organization. This remark may be qualified, and made more special by saying that this unfavorable cause, whether it be what is meant by the vague term scrofulous temperament, (a term which is often thrown back like dust in the eyes of the perplexed questioner) or whether it be a want of *tone* in the physical structure often affects most immediately the brain and nervous system. Indeed, there are many cases, where the defect of vision seems to arise from no malformation of the eye or its nerves, but from inaction or morbid action in the brain, or perhaps in that part of it about the root of the optic nerve.

The supposition that there is a smaller proportion of clever children among the blind than among the seeing, may seem to disagree with what has been said in former reports about the intellectual activity, and general attainments of our pupils, but it

*See Report for 1841, p. 4.

is to be considered, first, that hardly one half the pupils were born blind; second, that cases bordering upon imbecility would not be sent to the school, or if sent, would not be retained; and third, that there is a keen pursuit of knowledge by blind persons when they are once put upon its track, which goes far to make up for want of original power.

We do not mean to say that the pupils found in a school for the blind are less bright than those in a school for the seeing, but that of a hundred children born blind there is a much smaller proportion of those who will make clever scholars than among a hundred seeing children.

That which most especially characterises a school for the blind is the readiness—the eagerness even of the pupil to be taught: seeing children require skilful teaching; the intellectual repast in the school room must be cunningly prepared in order to make them prefer it to the crude knowledge which they pick up out of doors; while the blind, having less opportunity for satisfying their appetite for knowledge out of doors, take more readily whatever may be offered in school.

But activity of intellect, and a love for intellectual pursuits, may exist with a temperament which makes a person sluggish and disinclined to physical effort; and the blind whose intellectual nature is developed are inclined to expend all their nervous energy in intellectual exercise, and have little inclination or power for muscular labor. We have never known an instance of a blind person beyond the age of boyhood, who exhibited marks of that pent-up energy which is seen in so many men, and which

seems to impel them to some muscular effort. The blind work, as they move, slowly and cautiously; seldom with all their might, and never, as some seeing men, who seem impelled by an irresistible power within driving them onward.

We make these remarks as connected with the physiology of blindness, and as applicable generally to those born blind, but in no sense disrespectfully. With many of our own pupils who attain to maturity of mind, the great difficulty arises not from disinclination to work, but the apparent inutility of work; for, with the best disposition, there is often but little prospect that he can obtain enough of it to support life.

The case of the isolated blind workman is indeed very hard; suppose him to be expert at his simple handicraft, industrious in its pursuit, temperate in his habits, and economical even to self-denial in his expenses, still he must labor under immense disadvantage in the disposal of his work. If he carry it about to his customers, he loses his own time, or has to employ a boy with eyes, who besides is necessary to him in all his own walks for exercise. If he send his work to be sold on commission, he has to wait a slow return, to pay per centage, and to risk the total loss; so that the cases are few where workmen can earn their livelihood by working on their own account. This is the case indeed with a great majority of seeing mechanics; they find it more economical to unite in small groups, and devote their whole time and attention to their work, while another, who is called their employer, but whom they employ, as much as he does them, looks after

the shop rent, the capital, the sales, and other things. How much more important is it for the blind to avail themselves of this principle of division of labor.

But something more than all these considerations has made us desirous of building upon a permanent basis, a department of our Institution, the sole object of which shall be to supply work to such blind persons as have finished their course of instruction, and are desirous of employment, but who cannot find enough of it. We cannot flatter ourselves that we have yet succeeded so as to make it serviceable to a large number, but the result, under all the unfavorable circumstances of an experiment, has been such as to afford great encouragement, and to enable us to recommend most earnestly the support and the extension of the work department to those who may succeed us in the management of the Institution.

There have been sixteen young men, and six young women employed in the work shop during the last year. These persons are not considered as pupils of the Institution, almost all of them having finished their course of instruction. Some have been employed steadily throughout the year, some only when the work was most abundant. There has been paid to them the sum of one thousand and thirty-one dollars, and ninety-eight cents, the wages of their labor.

A few of them have earned what they received, but this cannot be said of all, for a strict account of all the expenses of the department shows that it is a charge upon the treasury of the Institution. This charge is diminishing however, and it may eventu-

ally be removed entirely. We have no reason to suppose that it has been entirely removed in any of the European or American Institutions for the Blind where the experiment has been fully tried, still we believe it may be done. In Europe the wages of even seeing workmen barely suffice for the necessities of life; and in this country the experiment has not yet been tried long enough to decide the question fairly.

But even supposing that the support of this department will be a permanent charge upon the funds of the Institution, still it ought to be continued; nor would it be easy to point out a way in which, for so small an outlay, so much good may be done. The articles manufactured are already beginning to find favor in the eyes of the public, and some jealousy has already been manifested by persons engaged in business similar to that pursued by the blind, lest the "great corporation" should injure them by selling goods at less than cost; we may mention, therefore, for the information of the public, and for the guidance of the benevolent, that this Institution does not go into the market with a view of ever making money out of the work of the blind. There are a score, we would there were an hundred young blind men and women who are assiduously working and anxiously hoping to earn a livelihood by making articles which will be acceptable and useful to the public. The sales-room for these articles is in Washington street; where they are placed in competition with other articles of the same nature, and no more is asked for them than they are really worth; but what is asked, and earnestly asked of the

public, is, that if they find they can get their money's worth in the work of the blind, they will give them a fair share of their patronage. The profits on the purchases that people may make, will go, not to swell the coffers of the Institution, but to make glad the hearts of those, who sitting in darkness, are toiling for bread by striving to please those who can see.

We wish that the patrons of this establishment could witness the joy which is felt by the blind workmen and women when the shopkeeper comes home at night, and tells them how many orders he has for work the next day,—we are sure they would not willingly withdraw their patronage. When a large order is obtained, as for the cushions of a church, or mattresses of a hotel, it causes great rejoicing; they rejoice, not that they are going to have holidays, but that they are going to have work days. Let one man go into that shop, and give an alms for the blind, and another man leave an order for their work, and the latter will confer the greatest pleasure, and do the most good, besides, getting back again the value of his money in the shape of an useful article.

Nevertheless, we would not put this appeal upon the ground of charity; there are certain articles which the blind can make as well as seeing persons, and they confine their attention to them. Such articles are not put lower than the usual and fair prices, nor are they put a fraction above them.

There have appeared at various times in some public prints, erroneous and entirely unfounded statements, that application for the admission of black children to this Institution, had been refused on the

ground of their color. Such statements have been unnoticed by the Board, because it was supposed the error would soon die, having no foundation in truth; but we perceive that it has lately been revived, and in the form of touching verse, introduced into children's school books stereotyped, and thus put into a shape to go down to posterity. It seems a duty, therefore, to the cause of truth, and the character of the Institution, to notice and contradict the stories.

The original error out of which the misrepresentations have grown, arose probably from the fact that soon after the Institution was put into operation, some persons inquired of an individual connected with it whether a colored blind boy could be admitted. In reply a wish was expressed that the application should not then be made, as the establishment was just struggling into existence; and it was urged among other objections, that more harm might be done if the admission of the boy kept others away, than good could be done to him. For this opinion the Board was not responsible; indeed, soon after, when the subject was brought up formally, it was referred to a committee, who reported at the next monthly meeting, October 3d, 1833, that "it was the duty of the Institution to receive colored pupils," and the report was unanimously accepted. This was long before any one connected with the government of the Institution had heard of any public notice of the subject, either through the newspaper or in any other way.

About this time a colored woman brought a blind child to the Institution, and asked if it could be taught, (the date of the application is not exactly

known.) She was kindly received, and assured that as soon as the child was old enough, it should be admitted, for it was then less than four years old, much younger than the age fixed for admission.

She went away, apparently pleased with her reception, and satisfied with the decision. Nothing was ever heard of the subject by any of us until the appearance of the pathetic description in verse, of an imaginary interview between the mother and the Director, in which she says :

“ They told me—and scornfully bade me go back,
 “ They’d have nothing to do with a child that was black.”

This we assert to be a fancy sketch. All applications are made to the Director, and that gentleman affirms that no such interview ever took place, and no such language was ever used by him to any applicant. He endeavored to contradict the report as soon as it reached his ears, and published a letter in one of the leading abolition papers, showing it to be void of foundation, and declaring what was the resolution of the Board as well as his own views ; nevertheless, it still continues to be nourished and kept alive.

It was some time after this that regular application was made for the admission of a colored boy named Sullivan Anthony, who was spoken of in the papers as having remarkable capacities ; it was known, however, by some persons connected with the Institution that he was a most unfavorable subject for instruction, and as the school was then removed to the country, while the carpenters were making alterations on the premises in town, his admission was de-

ferred. He was admitted to the school by a vote passed March 31, 1836, and shared in its advantages with other children; his board being paid by the Trustees in a respectable colored family. As soon as the Institution was removed to South Boston, he was taken into the house, and treated in every respect like the other pupils. He remained four years, but proved to be hopelessly dull as a scholar. He was taught to make shoe brushes and when he had learned as much as was supposed would enable him to get a living by the help of his friends, he was discharged in 1840. He was afterwards supplied with stock and tools by the Institution, an offer was made to sell all the brushes that he might make, and every disposition manifested to aid him.

Another colored person had been admitted, although he was beyond the age prescribed for admission. Both have been treated as all others will be, according to their merits, and not according to the color of their skins.

We have thought it proper to make this statement and we dismiss the subject without comment.

For an account of the finances, we would refer you to the accompanying Report of the Treasurer, Mr. Peter R. Dalton. We avail ourselves of this opportunity of acknowledging our obligation to that gentleman for the accommodating and efficient manner in which he has for years performed the duties of his office.

It was mentioned in the last Annual Report, that the printing of books for the blind had been suspended for want of funds, but that an effort would be made to renew it; we are sorry to say one year

has passed, and nothing has been printed. There is urgent need of books; and our wish to resume printing is the stronger, since there seems to be no immediate prospect of any other Institution in the country taking up the work, and prosecuting it vigorously.

It has never been thought expedient to appropriate any of the funds destined for the support of the Institution, to printing books; and all that has been done has been through the liberality of a few gentlemen, to whom the blind must be under great obligations. We may mention particularly, Mr. Peter C. Brooks, and Mr. John C. Gray, both of whom have caused entire editions of books to be printed.

Mr. Roach of New Bedford has just given a liberal sum, which together with some smaller donations, will warrant putting to press a work on Natural Philosophy. We hope that the beginning which is about to be made, will not have an end until a select library of standard books shall be placed at the fingers end of all the blind in the country.*

The general course of instruction and the routine of the establishment has been so often detailed in former Reports, that we need not repeat it. We

*Since the above was written the Director has put to press the work on Natural Philosophy; and, encouraged by some benevolent gentlemen has commenced a Cyclopædia for the Blind, of which he hopes to issue four or five volumes during the year. It will be continued and extended to twenty volumes, if sufficient aid can be procured. It will be compiled by Dr. Howe, and contain such matter as he may judge most useful to the Blind. The cost of each copy will be \$50, if carried out in the way contemplated, and any one disposed to make a valuable present to a blind person, or to enable Institutions to make one to meritorious pupils, can do it, and at the same time contribute to the success of the work, by subscribing for a copy.

believe it will be found to have succeeded well during the past year and to have been silently but surely working out good.

Finally, we commend the Institution to the attention of the Legislature on whose favor it is dependent for support, to the Corporation, and to the public. We trust that the better it is known, the more certain it will be of a continuance of that good will and generous support which it has hitherto received.

All which is respectfully submitted.

EDWARD BROOKS,
THOMAS G. CARY,
JOHN D. FISHER,
JOHN C. GRAY,
OZIAS GOODWIN,
JOHN HOMANS,
SAMUEL MAY,
JAMES K. MILLS,
SAMUEL P. LOUD,
HORACE MANN,
ROBERT RANTOUL,
STEPHEN FAIRBANKS.

APPENDIX A.

LAURA BRIDGMAN.



TO THE TRUSTEES.

GENTLEMEN :

I have the honor to lay before you the following Report upon the history and instruction of Laura Bridgman.

In preparing it I have introduced some speculations which may appear trite, or uninteresting to those conversant with metaphysics; I have also indulged in some reflections upon such points as seemed to have any bearing upon common instruction, and these may seem trivial and unnecessary to practical teachers. But in apology, let me say, that there are a vast number of persons who take a deep interest in the case, who are neither metaphysicians nor teachers, and they will perhaps prefer even my crude speculations and reflections to a bald narration of facts.

To such let me say, in the first place, that nothing can show in a more clear and forcible manner, than Laura's case, the difficulties to be overcome when we learn our vernacular tongue, and the inferiority of artificial to natural methods in the acquisition of language.

The difficulties in the way of the deaf mute are very great; so great indeed that we may safely say they are never entirely overcome; because, although ingenious men by centuries of labor have built up a beautiful system by which the mutes are enabled to read, to write and to con-

verse with ease and with pleasure, still they must, in spite of education, remain insensible to many of the charms of conversation, and the beauties of style, both of prose and of verse. But this beautiful system is addressed entirely to the eye, and poor Laura has no sight.

She has a good intellect, she has been seven years under instruction; her teachers have not been wanting in zeal and diligence, and she has been herself untiring in her efforts, and yet she is now on the verge of womanhood, without so much acquaintance with language as a common child of six years old. This often excites the surprise of visitors who have known the history of her case for a long time, and have taken great interest in it.

In truth people seldom stop to reflect upon the nature of arbitrary language, upon its essential importance to the development of the intellect, or upon the wonderful process by which we gradually advance from the power of naming single objects, to that of condensing many of them into one complex term;—from the Alpha of language, mamma!—up to its Omega—Universe!

How much is asserted in the simplest sentence, as this, for instance; “we might have been more truly happy had our widowed father remained contentedly with us”—here is the assertion of the plurality of persons; of their condition in past time; of the fact of their having been moderately happy in the society of their father; there is the negation of their entire happiness; the implied doubt whether after all they would have been happier; their relation as children; their regret at their father’s departure: of the other person it is directly affirmed that he had been with his children; it is implied that he had been married; that he had lost his wife, not by separation, but by death; that he was not contented to remain with his children; that he had gone away from them; that he might have remained with them, &c. &c.

When we reflect upon that principle of the mind

which requires that all possible objects, qualities and conditions must be linked so closely with signs that the perception of the signs shall recall them necessarily and instantly; and when we consider how much is attained by young persons, who a few years ago could hardly master baby's prattle, but who now have all the vast sweep of thought, the great amount of knowledge, the degree of reflection, of separation, and of generalization necessary to comprehend such a phrase as

“Count all the advantage prosperous vice attains,
—’Tis but what virtue flies from, and disdains;”

we may say with the ancient—“there is but one object greater than the human soul and that one is its Creator.”

The space between the starting point of the infant and that obtained by the mature man, is immense; but our minds, aided by language which give to them wings, skim swiftly and delightedly over the whole, as the wild fowl flies from zone to zone; while Laura is like one of those birds shorn of its wings and doomed to attempt the vast distance on its weary feet. If persons will only make these reflections they will be inclined rather to wonder that she has gone so far, than to feel surprised at her not having gone farther.

With these preliminary remarks, I proceed to a notice of her progress during the year 1844.

I was in Europe during the first half of the year; and the most serious cause of regret which I have for my absence, is the interruption which it caused in my supervision of her education. It may be that I should not have been able to prevent all unfavorable impressions upon her mind, even had I been always here; they were perhaps inevitable at her age, and with her increased capacity for conversation with others, but at any rate I should have tried.

Her teacher, Miss Mary Swift, has been faithful and in-

dustrious; and in the intellectual instruction she has shown great tact and ability. Had all others been as discreet and wise as she, we should not have to regret some impressions which the child has received, and which I shall presently mention.

Her bodily health has been very good during the whole year. She has increased in stature; and her figure which is more fully unfolded, is well proportioned in all its parts, and strong and graceful. She continues to improve in the knowledge and use of language, as will be shown by the following letters which were written solely by her; and by the extracts from her teacher's journal, in which were recorded at the moment, and with great exactitude, the very words she used.

24TH MARCH, 1844.

MY DEAR MRS. HOWE:

I want to see you very much, I hope you are very well. Miss J. is very well and happy, I think of you very very often. I was very much pleased to receive a letter from you, and I liked it very much. When you come home, I shall shake your hands and hug and kiss you very hard because I love you and am your dear friend. Miss J. is making a nice worsted chair for you to please you very much for a new house. I send much love to you and a kiss. Are you very glad to receive letters from me? One night I dreamed that I was very glad to see you again and that I slept with you all night. I hope that you do not forget to talk with your fingers. I am sad that people are very idle and dirty and poor. I write many letters to you because I love you very much. My mother wrote a letter to Miss J. that she was very sick and my little sister was quite sick, but they are getting well. I am very well. I am your dear friend. I try very hard about America and Europe and Asia and many other things. I can say ship, paper, Dr. baby, tea, mother, and father with my mouth. My teacher always reads a story to me: she is kind to me: she sets me a good example.

My dear friend good bye.

LAURA BRIDGMAN.

In another letter written soon after, she said:

"I am happy that your baby is so happy to see the bright light. I want you to come here *now*; if you do not come quick, then I must send a long string to pull you over the sea to South Boston. I thought of you and Julia, and Dr. many times; that they would love me very much, because I love them and you so much."

The following are extracts from the teacher's journal:

April 3d, 1844. At nine when Laura came down, she said "my heart

beats very quick, it is sick." I asked what made it so, "Long ago when Drew was my teacher, my heart beat quick and ached, because I felt very sad that Adeline died, and I did not know about going to Heaven." I asked her if that made her heart ache now? She said, "Monday I thought much about my dear best Friend, and *why* I should die, and it made my heart beat quick and I thought if I should know when he took my breath, and I tried to draw breath and could not. Do you ever lose breath?" To change the conversation I said yes, when I run up stairs quickly. "I have lost part of the heart, said she; it is not so large as it was when I was small." I asked when she lost it? "I think it went to my lungs. My blood ran quickly and made my heart beat quickly."

April 8th. At nine commenced the lesson by telling Laura about the Rail Road from St. Petersburg to Moscow, and that they were going to have a man from the United States to build it, and about the expense, distance, &c. She asked how the people could get \$4,000,000 to pay for it. This introduced the Emperor Nicholas, his rank, office, &c., and from that she asked what the man was called who took care of Americans; told her about the President of the United States, his name and residence. I asked her if she remembered Harrison? At the time of his death, she saw several ladies with crape on their arms, and she made one for herself. When I recalled this to her mind she asked why the people wore it. This introduced the subject of wearing black in mourning, which she has never known any thing about before. While talking of Harrison I told her the people were sad because they could not have him to take care of them. She said, "were they sad that he went to Heaven and was very happy there?" Promised her a continuance of the lesson to-morrow.

One of her exercises consists in having a simple story read to her, of which she is to give a version the next day in her own language. Her first original composition, however, gives a better idea of her use of language than her letters, in writing which she has adopted too formal a style. The whole story is of her own invention.

"There was a little girl named Jane Damon who lived in the country with Mrs. Damon. She was a very good and amiable, and was never cross any. Jane always obeyed her mother. One day she went with her mother to see her friends and they went to see beautiful flowers in the garden. When Mrs. Damon told Jane, you must go to school, she got ready as fast as she could. She had the books and writing in her own desk. Her teacher was very kind to her scholars. Her name was Miss Charlotte. Mrs. Damon gave Jane a beautiful present. Her sister asked what it was and her mother said it was a ring called diamond stone in it. After a few days her mother took Jane to see her Grandmother and staid for one week. She had a very pleasant visit. Mrs. Damon had a little girl named Clara Damon, and Jane took good care of Clara, while her mother was away a little while. It did not cry any for some milk, but Jane fed Clara with a spoon she loved her so much, &c."

Her teacher says,

Aug. 26th. At eight she was talking about a variety of subjects, and

among the number, of sickness—she said “I was sick last year and my *mind* was dizzy and I was much frightened in my heart.” Then she wanted to know the meaning of insensible, and of crucified. I thought I could give her a general definition that would satisfy her as well as any thing else, and I told her it was to make a cross. She said “Jane Damon crucifies the wires for her basket, and winds the worsted on them.” I had to tell her she did not understand it, and had better not use it. The next word was mingle,—defined it by *mix*—but she did not understand that any better. Gave her an example of the use of the two words, and she said “the drunkard mixes sugar and rum to drink.” Then she wished me to understand that she had not forgotten any thing and gave me a recapitulation—“perish is to die, you told me last winter—machine, my writing board is a machine to write with; require, is when I tell you, you must mend my stockings. I require you to do them. I require you to read my story to Jane Damon.” She is still on the Globe, in Geography, and studying the Zones. To-day, the lesson was to tell what zone the different countries in South America were; which, with a great deal of difficulty, she accomplished.

Mention was made in a former Report of her disposition to use the lungs and vocal organs. She still shows this; and so does Oliver Caswell, though to a much smaller extent than Laura. The manner in which she uses these organs seems to show their natural office, and would settle the question, (if it be any longer a question) whether they were destined by nature to be the medium of intellectual communication among men, or whether they were selected from among other equally possible means for interchange of thought; as pantomime, arbitrary visible signs, &c.

When Laura feels any strong emotion her chest is inflated, the air is retained a moment, and then expelled with quickness and force, and is often interrupted in its passage by the glottis, tongue, or lips, thus producing a variety of interjections. The fact of these broken sounds will be interesting to the philologist because they form the connecting link between natural language and speech; two things sometimes confounded, but which differ widely from each other; natural language is the servant of the heart; speech is the handmaid of the intellect.

Deaf mutes generally when they are moved by feeling, gesticulate violently, and also make broken sounds with the vocal organs, thus bringing in the adjuncts of speech, as we add gestures to our language when we are excited.

Pains have been taken with Laura to suppress her disposition to make these disagreeable interjections, for although they may be considered as parts of natural language, it is language natural only in the rudest state of society—in the lowest developement of intellect, and she is to live in a society where they would be disagreeable. The correction however, is not easy to make; she may have been sometimes checked too abruptly, and in a way to let her perceive that it was done rather for the gratification of others, than for her own good, and children always resist the unconditional surrender of their own will to that of another, unless the summons be made in the irresistible language of love—which is the *open sesame* to every child's heart.

Her teacher was one day talking with her on the subject, and showing her the propriety of repressing these noises, when she said, "she did not always try not to make them." Miss Swift urged her reasons for wishing her to do so, when Laura said, "*but I have very much voice!*" This was the truth of the matter; the nervous energy which rapidly accumulated within her while sitting still, found in this way a partial means of escape; and it was as hard for her to restrain it, as it is for little boys who have "very much motion in them," to sit still in school when unoccupied; the fluid accumulates within them until it makes them uneasy, and they relieve themselves from the pressure by suddenly pushing or kicking their neighbors, or by some motion of the body which acts like the opening of a safety valve, and leaves them quiet for a while.

She was not inclined to give up the argument entirely, and said in her defence, "God gave me much voice." She yielded, however, and saw the reasonableness of the request, especially as she had particular hours when she could make as much noise as she wished to do. At such times she often goes into a closet, and shutting the door, indulges herself in a surfeit of sounds.

Great interest has been manifested on all sides to know the effect of religious instruction upon her mind, and not without good cause. I have always thought it desirable on many accounts to give her such ideas, and such only, on this and other important topics as she shall be able always to retain. It is painful to be forced to relinquish ideas which by long possession have become regarded as much one's own—as much a part of one's self, as one's property, or one's limbs. We defend our religious, political, and other opinions with a zeal not proportionate to their truth, but to the length of time and the closeness of intimacy with which we have associated them with ourselves: when we have never contemplated the possibility of their falsity, the refusal of others to admit them as true, and still more, the attempt to destroy them, often excites as much passion as would the protest of a draft, or an assault upon the person. Some men may preserve their elasticity of mind, and retain unimpaired their confidence in their last belief, after the abandonment of several creeds, especially if blessed with self-complacency; but all cannot do so; for if the soul have drifted from several anchors in the storm of infidelity, it will hardly rely even upon the *best bower* of faith, as perfectly sure and steadfast.

It seems especially desirable that Laura should never be obliged to remodel her faith. There is a moral in the story of the boy who when the microscope first revealed to him the minute and wondrous structure of one of his hairs, was surprised and pained at not finding the *number* upon it; he had believed literally that the hairs of his head were all “numbered;” and being of a shy nature he would not ask any explanation, but allowed his faith in the Bible to be seriously impaired. Laura can never use a microscope, but she will, by-and-by, bring the magnifying power of mature judgment to bear upon all that she now takes unhesitatingly from others as literal truth; and I would that she might always find the *number* written upon every thing on which she had been led to look for it.

But, I have given in former Reports, some of my reasons for deferring this most important part of her education, and I need not now repeat them ; suffice it to say, that I wished to give her only such instruction about religion and God, as she was prepared to receive and understand, so that her moral and religious nature should be developed *pari passu* with her intellect. It was delightful for me to find that without any particular direction being given to it from without, her mind naturally tended towards the causes of things, and that after an acquaintance with the extent of human creative power, she perceived the necessity of superhuman power for the explanation of a thousand daily recurring phenomena. She could not indeed like the poor Indian, "see God in clouds and hear Him in the wind," but then He was manifest in the springing grass, the bursting flower, and the ripening fruit ; the genial sun, the falling rain, the driving snow—these, and countless other things which became known to her by her single sense, made her aware of a power transcending the power of man. It would have been more delightful still to lead her wondering mind to the perception of the higher attributes of God, as her capacity for such perception was unfolded, until, her moral nature being fully developed, she might have been as much impressed with love for his tender mercies as she had been with wonder at his Almighty Power.

I am aware that many will say it is impossible that Laura, ignorant as she is, should have by herself conceived the existence of God, because it is said that of the thousands of deaf mutes who have been received into the Institutions of this country, no one ever arrived at that truth unaided.

Now there is very great vagueness in such general negations ; the words can be taken in various senses, and are difficult to be proved in any. It may be said that no man ever arrived at the knowledge of the fact that ten and ten make twenty, by the unassisted efforts of his own mind ; for if he had never associated with other human

beings he would probably never have perceived that relation between numbers.

The words "knowledge of God" may also be understood in different ways; if a child ascertains that tables and chairs and carpets; houses, ships, and machinery; carriages, tools, watches, and a thousand other things, are made by men, and then infers that the sun, moon, and stars, the hills, rivers, and rocks, must have been created, but could not have been made by man,—that child has an idea of the existence of God; and when you teach him the three letters G-O-D, you do not make to him a revelation of God's existence, you only give to him a name for a power the existence of which he had already conceived in his own mind. We teachers are apt to overrate our own efforts: let us attempt to convey a knowledge of abstract truths to parrots and monkeys, and then we shall know how much is done by children, and how little by ourselves.

It is in this sense that I mean to be understood when I say that Laura Bridgman of herself arrived at the conception of the existence of God.

Unless there has been some such intellectual process in a child's mind, the words God, Deity, &c. must be utterly insignificant to it. We pronounce certain words with great solemnity and reverence, and the child perceives and understands our manner, for that is the natural language of our feelings; he imitates us, and the repetition of the words will ever after, by association of ideas, call up in his mind the same vague feelings of solemnity and reverence; but all this may be unaccompanied by any thing like an intellectual perception of God's existence and creative power.

It will be said that children three years old will repeat devoutly the Lord's prayer, and tell correctly what God did on each of the six days of Creation; but in so doing they too often take the name of the Lord in vain, and sometimes, alas! worse than in vain.

Children wish to attach some ideas to every sign which is given to them ; we give them words as signs of things before the capacity of understanding the things is developed in their minds, they attach to the sign some idea, no matter how inappropriate or grotesque, and there it remains trammelling the thoughts, and preventing them from afterwards using the words in a right sense. How vague is the idea which many people attach to some words ! and of how much mischief to the world has this vagueness been the source. How long does it take us to sever these ties ! how many of us go to our graves without ever breaking a fibre of them—without ever having divested words of the crude ideas attached to them in childhood, or contemplated the things with the clear eye of reason. We look with contempt upon a man who is instantly and irresistibly moved to solemnity of feeling, and to acts of devotion by the bare sight of two pieces of wood nailed together cross-wise, or by the elevation of the host : but, how many sounding words which are insignificant in themselves are dinned into our ears to excite our feelings, or overpower our reason, in the same way that the sublime image is held up before the eyes of our wondering brother.

It may be said that no human being can have any adequate idea of God's attributes, and that therefore all we have to do is to give Laura such ideas of Him as pious christians form from the study of natural and revealed religion ; but, I know not what others may do, I cannot do this. Every man sees God according to his own capacities, and his own nature ; the power of poor Laura's God must be weakness compared to the strength of Newton's, who saw Him guiding the huge planets along in their eternal course ; the love of her God must be selfishness compared to the love of the God of Howard the philanthropist, who embraced in the arms of his affection the whole human family ; but, so must the power and the love of the God of Newton and of Howard, be weakness and selfish-

ness compared to those attributes as seen by the cherubim and seraphim, each of whom see Him with a vision transcending that of the other, all of whom see Him with power transcending human, but none of whom can see Him as He is.

I might long ago have taught the Scriptures to Laura ; she might have learned, as other children do, to repeat line upon line, and precept upon precept ; she might have been taught to imitate others in prayer ; but her God must have been her own God, and formed out of the materials with which her mind had been stored. It was my wish to give her gradually such ideas of His power and love as would have enabled her to form the highest possible conception of His divine attributes. In doing this, it was necessary to guard as much as I could, against conveying impressions which it would be hard to remove afterwards, and to prevent her forming such notions as would seem unworthy to her more developed reason, lest the renouncement of them might impair her confidence in her own belief.

But various causes have combined to prevent what seemed to me the natural and harmonious developement of her religious nature ; and now, like other children, she must take the consequences of the wise or unwise instruction given by others. I did not long hold the only key to her mind ; it would have been unkind and unjust to prevent her using her power of language as fast as she acquired it, in conversation with others, merely to carry out a theory of my own, and she was left to free communication with many persons even before my necessary separation from her of more than a year.

During my absence, and perhaps before, some persons more zealous than discreet, and more desirous to make a proselyte than to keep conscientiously their implied promise of not touching upon religious topics, some such persons talked to her of the Atonement, of the Redeemer, the Lamb of God, and of some very mystical

points of mere speculative doctrine. These things were perhaps not farther beyond her comprehension than they were beyond the comprehension of those persons who assumed to talk to her about them ; but they perplexed and troubled her, because, unlike such persons she wished that every word should be the symbol of some clear and definite idea.

She could not understand metaphorical language ; hence the Lamb of God was to her a *bona fide* animal, and she could not conceive why it should continue so long a lamb, and not grow old like others and be called a sheep.

I must be supposed to mention this only as her faithful chronicler, and to do it also in sorrow. If the poor child spoke inadvertently on such topics, it was without consciousness of it, and she was made to do so by indiscreet persons, not by any communications of mine or of her teacher ; we shall never speak to her of Jesus Christ but in such a way as to impart a portion at least of our own reverence, gratitude, and love.

During my absence in Europe, I received from her several letters, and among others the following :

24TH OF MARCH, 1844.

MY DEAR DR. HOWE :

I want to see you very much, I hope that you will come to South Boston in May, I have got a bad cough, for I got cold when I came home, in much snow with Miss Swift, but my cough is little better. When you come home I shall be very happy to have you teach me in the Psalms Book, about God and many new things I read in the Harvey Boy's Book every Sunday. I am learning Asia now, I will tell you all about new things to please you very much. Why do you not write a letter to me often ? Do you always pray to God to bless me. I think of you often. I send a great deal of love to you and Mrs. Howe. I shall be very happy to see you and her when you come home. I always miss you much. All the girls and I and Lurena had a very pleasant sleighing seven miles to a hotel. We had nice drink of lemon and sugar and mince pie and sponge cake. Governor Briggs came twice to see us and the blind scholars. We are all well and happy and strong. I have not seen you for ten months, that is very long. I wrote a letter to Governor and he wrote a letter to me long ago. Mr. Clifford is a Dr. now to cure his wife. I wrote a letter to her. I want you to write a letter to me. Miss Swift sends her love to you. Are you in a hurry to see me and J. again ? I would like to live with you and your wife in a new house, because I love you the best. All folks are very well and happy. I want you to answer my last letter to you about God and Heaven, and souls and many questions.

My dear friend good bye.

LAURA BRIDGMAN.

In reply I wrote to her as follows :

MY DEAR LITTLE LAURA :

Mrs. Howe has a sweet little baby ;—it is a little girl ; we shall call her Julia ; she is very smooth, and soft, and nice ; she does not cry much, and we love her very, very much. You love her too, I think, do you not ? But you never felt of her, and she never kissed you, and how can you love her ? It is not your hands, nor your body, nor your head, which loves her, and loves me, but your soul. If your hand were to be cut off, you would love me the same ; so it is not the body which loves. Nobody knows what the soul is, but we know it is not the body, and cannot be hurt like the body ; and when the body dies the soul cannot die. You ask me in your letter a great many things about the soul, and about God ; but, my dear little girl, it would take very much time, and very many sheets of paper to tell you all I think about it, and I am very busy with taking care of my dear wife ; but I shall try to tell you a little, and you must wait until I come home, in June, and we will talk very much about all these things. You have been angry a few times, and you have known others to be angry, and you know what I mean by anger ; you love me and many friends, and you know what I mean by love. When I say there is a spirit of love in the world, I mean that good people love each other ; but you cannot feel the spirit of love with your fingers, it has no shape, nor body ; it is not in one place more than in another, yet wherever there are good people there is a spirit of love. God is a spirit ; the spirit of love. If you go into a house, and the children tell you that their father whips them, and will not feed them ; if the house is cold, and dirty, and every body is sad and frightened, because the father is bad, and angry, and cruel, you will know that the father has no spirit of love. You never felt of him, you never had him strike you, you do not know what man he is, and yet you know he has not the spirit of love—that is, he is not a good, kind father. If you go into another house, and the children are all warm, and well fed, and well taught, and are very happy, and every body tells you that the father did all this, and made them happy—then you know he has the spirit of love ; you never saw him, and yet you know certainly that he is good, and you may say that the spirit of love reigns in that house. Now, my dear child, I go all about in this great world, and I see it filled with beautiful things, and there are a great many millions of people, and there is food for them, and fire for them, and clothes for them, and they can be happy if they have a mind to be, and if they will love each other. All this world, and all these people, and all the animals, and all things, were made by God. He is not a man, nor like a man ; I cannot see Him, nor feel Him, any more than you saw and felt the good father of that family ; but I know that He has the spirit of love, because he too provided every thing to make all the people happy. God wants every body to be happy all the time, every day, Sundays and all, and to love one another ; and if they love one another they will be happy ; and when their bodies die, their souls will live on, and be happy, and then they will know more about God.

The good father of the family I spoke to you about, let his children do as they wished to do, because he loved to have them free ; but he let them know that he wished them to love each other, and to do good ; and if they obeyed his will they were happy ; but if they did not love each other, or if they did any wrong, they were unhappy ; and if one child did wrong it made the others unhappy too. So in the great world. God left men, and women, and children, to do as they wish, and let them know if they love one another, and do good, they will be happy ; but if they do wrong, they will be unhappy, and make others unhappy likewise.

I will try to tell you why people have pain sometimes, and are sick, and die ; but I cannot take so much time and paper now. But you must be sure

that God loves you, and loves every body, and wants you and every body to be happy ; and if you love every body, and do them all the good you can, and try to make them happy, you will be very happy yourself, and will be much happier after your body dies than you are now.

Dear little Laura,—I love you very much. I want you to be happy and good. I want you to know many things, but you must be patient and learn easy things first, and hard ones afterwards. When you were a little baby, you could not walk, and you learned first to creep on your hands and knees, and then to walk a little, and by and by you grew strong, and walked much. It would be wrong for a little child to want to walk very far before it was strong. Your mind is young and weak, and cannot understand hard things, but by and by it will be stronger, and you will be able to understand hard things ; and I and my wife will help Miss Swift to show you all about things that now you do not know. Be patient, then, dear Laura ; be obedient to your teacher, and to those older than you ; love every body, and do not be afraid.

Good bye ! I shall come soon, and we will talk and be happy.

Your true friend,

DOCTOR.

Before receiving this, she wrote me again, as follows :

MY VERY DEAR DR. HOWE :

What can I first say to God when I am wrong ? Would he send me good thoughts and forgive me when I am very sad for doing wrong ? Why does he not love wrong people if they love him ? Would he be very happy to have me think of Him and Heaven very often ? Do you remember that you said I must think of God and Heaven ? I want you to please to answer me to please me. I have learned about great many things to please you very much. Mrs. Harrington has got a new little baby eight days last Saturday. God was very generous and kind to give babies to many people. Miss Rogers's mother has got baby two months ago. I want to see you very much. I send much love to you. Is God ever ashamed ? I think of God very often to love Him. Why did you say that I must think of God ? You must answer me all about it, if you do not I shall be sad. Shall we know what to ask God to do ? When will he let us go to see Him in Heaven ? How did God tell people that he lived in Heaven ? How could he take care of folks in Heaven and why is he our Father ? When can he let us go in Heaven ? Why can not He let wrong people to go to live with Him and be happy ? Why should he not like to have us ask him to send us good thoughts if we are not very sad for doing wrong ?

I give the following extract from my own journal, as a specimen of the method of conversing with her on such subjects.

In talking with Laura to-day, on the subject of the Deity, I said, How do men make bread ? "From wheat." How do they make wheat ? "They cannot make wheat," said she. Then how do they get it ? said I. "God makes it grow." Why ? "For man to eat," said she. I then explained to her that some birds and animals eat grain, and asked—Why does God give it to them ? She said,

“To make them happy.” But does He love them? said I. “No,” said she; “they have no souls.”

I then told her there are some beautiful islands on the globe, where the sun shines clearly and warmly; where there are rich meadows, and sweet flowers, and tall trees, and shady groves; where the brooks run merrily down the hills, and where there is plenty of delicious fruit and nutritive plants; that these islands are never visited by man, yet nevertheless that thousands of birds are singing in the branches, and rejoicing over their little ones; that the young animals are frolicking on the soft grass, and the old ones looking on them with silent joy; that the fishes are swimming briskly about in the clear streams, and leaping out sportfully into the air, and that all this has been going on thousands of years. After thus trying to give her as vivid a picture as I could of the happy inhabitants of these peaceful isles, I asked her who made such beautiful places? She said—“God.” But for what did He make them? “To make the animals all happy,” said she,—and added, of her own accord, “God is very good to make them happy.” She then meditated a little, and said—“Can they thank Him?” Not in words, said I. I then went on to show her that He had no need of thanks in words; that He did not do these good things in order to be thanked, when she stopped me by asking “why He did not give them souls?” I tried to explain how much of reason and sense they really possess, and how grateful all of God’s children should be for what they have, without asking why it was not more, when she said suddenly, “Why is God never unkind or wrong?” I tried as well as I could to explain the perfection of God’s character, and its freedom from human frailties; but alas! how vain is the effort, when neither teacher nor pupil have any other standard than human littleness by which to measure God’s greatness.

There is this constant difficulty with her, (and is it not

one too much overlooked in the religious instruction of other children,) that being unable to form any idea of virtue and goodness in the abstract, she must seek it in the concrete ; and her teachers and friends, frail and imperfect beings like herself, furnish the poor impersonations of the peerless attributes of God.

This difficulty might have been avoided, I think, by the plan which I had marked out for the orderly development of her intellectual faculties and moral sentiments, and which was simply to follow the natural order ; but since that plan has been marred by the well-meant officiousness of others, there remains only to remedy, as far as we can, what we cannot cure entirely—the bad effects of ill-timed direction of her thoughts to subjects too far above her comprehension.

After the conversation related above, I went on to illustrate, as well as I could, the difference between human and divine care of animals. I said, why does man take care of a cow, and get hay into his barn to feed her in winter? “Oh!” said she, “to get her milk!” Why does he take care of his horse, and keep him covered with a warm blanket, and feed him? “That is to ride him well,” said she. Why do people keep cats, and feed them? “To catch mice!” Why do farmers take such good care of sheep? “To get wool.” But when the cow and the sheep are old, and cannot work, what does man do? “He kills to get meat.” Well! said I, why does God make the grass to grow in the meadow, and let the cow eat it,—does HE want her milk? “No, no!” said she. Does HE need the wool of the sheep? “No, no!” replied she, vehemently—“He does not want any thing!” Presently she said, “How do men know whether cows are willing to give them their milk?” I said, They do not know, and do not care. She mused a while, as is her wont when talking on a new subject, and said—“The

little lambs and young animals play—why do not sheep love to have their pleasure ?” I explained how they had pleasure in giving milk to their young ; how they loved to eat the tender grass, and lie in the shade. She seemed to have another difficulty, and said—“ Why do cats want to kill mice ? they have no love !”

To answer this question, it would have been necessary to open up the whole of that wonderful and benevolent scheme by which God, through the agency of death, bestows the blessings of existence upon myriads of generations, instead of upon a single one ; and this scheme, like many others, can only be fully explained to her when her reasoning powers are fully developed.

There are a great many things with the existence of which most young persons become familiar, but of which Laura, as yet, knows nothing ; such as wars, and fightings, crimes of various kinds, severe accidents, and awful deaths.

Not long ago, allusion was made incidentally in conversation with her, to murder and capital punishment, when she instantly asked, with much eagerness, and with an expression of horror, why a man would kill another ? The explanation was painful, and probably unsatisfactory ; but not more so than that which followed, of capital punishment. She was perplexed to know why men should kill the murderer ; and her simple question amounted to asking why they try to remedy one evil deed by perpetrating a like deed ; it was as forcible as if put by Beccaria himself ; nor could I answer it, except by assuming the homeœpathic axiom, “ that like cures like.”

It may be remembered that in the Report of the year before last, mention was made of an instance where she was led by strong temptation to tell an untruth ; and of the deep regret and repentance which she manifested when she found how much wrong she had done to herself, and how much grief she had caused her friends. It seems that the

lesson has not been forgotten, for I find the following record in the teacher's journal :—

"At nine, talked with Laura an hour. She asked, 'Do you remember about the woollen gloves that I had two years ago? and that I hid them and told lie about them, because I did not like them?' She talked of nothing but this the whole hour; said she was sorry she did so, and that the reason was, because she preferred to wear kid gloves. She spoke of her work yesterday, and I told her she was very industrious to knit so much. She appeared very happy, and told me she would try to be very gentle all day, and not tire me, because I was very weak and sick."

We have not been so fortunate, however, as to avoid all explosions of passion, but I am constrained to say, I think that is less her fault than ours. The following record in her teacher's journal, I read with grief equalled only by surprise :

February 2d, 1844. At twelve, I was talking with her in the school-room, about the different kinds of coal, and the manner of making charcoal;—we had just commenced the latter subject, when I noticed that she had left her handkerchief upon the desk. I have always objected to this, and told her to keep it in her desk. She has never refused to do it, though I have noticed frequently that she did it with great reluctance, but have never spoken to her on the subject afterwards. To-day, when I told her to put it in the desk, she hesitated as usual, and put it in her lap, saying, "I prefer to put in my lap," and then held up her hand for me to go on with the story. I said, "I told you to put it in the desk, and now I want you to do it." She sat still for about two minutes, and then lifted the lid very high, threw the handkerchief into the desk, and let it fall with such a noise as to startle all in the school-room. Her face was growing pale, and she was evidently getting into a passion. This was the moment to cease urging her, and to leave her to herself for awhile. Whenever I have seen any thing of this kind, the question, Are you angry? has always recalled her to her senses; but now she answered, "I am very cross." I said to her, "I am very sorry,—and I am sorry you shut the desk lid so hard; I want you to open it again, and take your handkerchief to put it in gently. Putting on a very firm look, she said, "I will take it out to wipe my eyes,"—meaning, but not to mind you. I told her, I wanted her first to put it in gently. After a moment's hesitation, she took it out and let the cover slam as before, and then raised it to wipe her eyes. [Here she should have been taken to her room, and left to her own reflections.] I said No, decidedly, and took her hand down gently. She sat still awhile, and then uttered the most frightful yell that I ever heard. Her face was perfectly pale, and she trembled from head to foot. I said, "You must go and sit alone." One second she clung to my dress, [here was another critical moment, which should have been improved,] and then went quietly out of the room.

At dinner time, I led her to the table, without speaking, and after that gave her a chair to sit by herself, without work. Instead of looking troubled, as she generally does after having done any thing wrong, she assumed an expression of indifference, and talked to herself a little, and then feigned sleep. When she had taken tea, I asked her if she thought she could do as I told her to do this morning, if I let her go to the school-room. She said she would. I led her in, and she did it very quietly. After this, I

talked an hour with her, trying to get her to feeling as she ought. She acknowledged the wrong at once, and *said* she was sorry, but her countenance indicated any thing but sorrow. I left her during the hour for reading, and when I returned, she looked much more troubled, and I told her she might go to bed, hoping that her own thoughts might bring her to a right state of feeling.

Saturday, Feb. 3d. This morning have talked with Laura again, and am completely discouraged. I have tried every argument, and appealed to every motive that I can think of, and with but partial success. The only thing which seemed to move her at all was, that I did not want to punish her, but that I could not let her do many things to-day to make her happy; when she went to Exhibition, I could not let Sophia talk with her, and could not let her go to the party, because only good girls went. But these were direct appeals to selfishness, and they were all that touched her. I do not know what to do, and never felt the need of counsel more. As I had exhausted every argument, I thought I would try the effect of a lesson in Geography; so taught her something about the produce of different countries of Europe, and of their manufactures. She was very quiet during this, and also a writing lesson which followed. The regular lesson for the last hour's school would have been the reading of a story, and I thought best to omit it. At dinner, she seemed to be very well satisfied with herself. When it was time to go into the school-room for the exhibition, she said, "I think I had better not go." I merely said, "It is time," and took her hand to lead her. During the exhibition she said, "Is Sophia here?" I told her she was in her desk, in the school-room. "I am very happy," was the only reply. This was a spirit of defiance in Laura that I had never seen before. A few moments after, she attempted to kiss me, thinking she could take the advantage of the presence of company. She was very willing to answer her questions, and willing to do what I wished her to do. At seven, I told her she could go to bed, and she went, without any objection, but still with the same expression of countenance.

Sunday, Feb. 4th. As Laura proposed that she should sit alone to-day, I left her this forenoon in the basement, where she had seated herself. When I returned from church, she did not appear to be troubled at all. I led her to dinner, and then of her own accord she returned to the same place. At tea-time, she seemed much more sad, and after tea I sat down by her to try what effect I could produce then. I could now perceive a great difference, and after I had told her how wrong it was that she did not feel more sad for doing wrong, she said, "I do feel very sad now—I was sad and cried this afternoon, and I thought that I was *very* wrong, and I asked God to forgive me, and send me good thoughts, and to love me." She then asked the old question—"What shall I ask God first, when I ask Him to give me good thoughts? Must I say, Lord, Father, my Heavenly?" I answered her, that she could say just what she thought first, and that satisfied her. I told her that I was glad that she felt better now, and that I would forgive her, and I hoped she would never be angry again. She said, "I think I *never* shall do so again. Why do I feel so very sad after I ask God to forgive me, and when you forgive me?" I told her it was because she felt sorry that she had done wrong at all.

Every reflecting person must see and lament the error of treatment, but the best might have fallen into it. It may be good, it may be necessary, "to break the will of a child," but never unless we have vainly tried to make it break its own will.

How many softening hearts do we harden by our own sternness ; how often are rising sobs suppressed by harsh reproofs ; how many by their Gorgon aspect turn the just forming tear of contrition into stony hardness, and leave it the nucleus of selfishness and rage ! And if these things are done even by parents, who would “ coin their hearts, and drop their blood for drachmas ” to promote the real good of those whom they punish, how much oftener are they done by teachers who, when roused by opposition, forget that there may be great selfishness in their determination to carry their point. Even those who strive to govern their tempers, sometimes fail because their fathers “ ate the sour grapes, and set their teeth on edge.” Laura has not escaped all such untoward influences ; there are persons who have had much influence over her education, who have labored most diligently, and displayed great tact and ingenuity in developing her intellect, but who have never succeeded in inspiring that perfect love which casteth out fear ; there are others with far less intellect and acquirement, who have gained more complete dominion over her affections, and whose will and pleasure is her delightful law.

We sometimes attribute the misconduct of children to perverseness and ill-temper, when it is really occasioned by causes over which they have no control, such as indigestion, derangement of some of the bodily functions augmented by particular state of the atmosphere, and other things. In such conditions they feel unpleasantly, and having but imperfect development of the moral character, and little self control, they are unamiable and cross. With adults we follow Shakespere’s advice, that such “ little faults proceeding from distemper should be winked at,” but children are noticed instead of being left unobserved, and perhaps punished instead of being pitied or reasoned with, and they become sullen and sour.

The only other instance of ill-temper which I have to

notice is contained in the following extract, and it will be seen that it was kindly and judiciously treated.

Tuesday, January 16th. Laura continued to do well in Arithmetic this morning. Yesterday she went to see Miss J. in Boston, and while I was away, commenced fault-finding: Eunice was wrong because she had gone into the kitchen; Frank was wrong because he came over J's stairs to find Rogers. To each of these charges, which were evidently made, that she might blame them,—Miss J. said she was very glad they came. She then said I was not right since I put my dress on the bed. These were only a few of the cases. About three months ago, she did the same thing, and I talked with her a long time about it until I thought she saw the wrong, and felt sorry for it. When I called for her to take her home, she wanted to talk with me, but I told her I could not talk; that J. said she been unkind and wanted her to think about it. She said no more and soon after we got home it was time for her to go to bed. This morning at nine I told her I wanted to talk about it. She looked very sad, when I asked her to tell *me*, what she told J. In all the charges against Eunice and Frank,—I showed her where they were both right in doing what they did,—in reply to those she brought against myself—I told her of some careless things which she did yesterday when preparing to walk;—such as pulling a dress down and leaving it on the floor,—a closet door open, &c., and asked her if she would like to have me go to J. and tell of them, that she might blame her; and when I said that I shut the door, and hung up the dress, she answered, “you were very kind, I was very unkind.” I talked with her some time to convince her, how often she might tell her wrong stories, by blaming people for things she did not know about. She said “whose people did I blame?” I did not understand what she meant, and answered, you blamed *many* people. “I blamed the Lord’s people,” said she. I was surprised to hear this, and asked, what does Lord’s mean—“God’s—I saw it in a book;” and she showed me in “the Child’s Second Book” the Commandments, “I am the Lord thy God,” &c. She said “how can I ask God to forgive me for blaming his people?” You can ask him in your thoughts.” “Can I know when he forgives me—how can I know? He will give you good thoughts.—The next hour was for writing,—she came to me and said, “I have asked God to forgive me and I hope I shall not be unkind.” She then seated herself to write, but it was a long time before she could do so. I took a seat at a short distance from her and tried to read her conversation with herself, her soliloquy. She said to herself, “I am very sorry.” “Dr. said he preferred to teach me himself.” “Why can I not know? It makes me very nervous.” There was much more that I could not read.

Jan. 17th. At nine gave her a lesson in Philosophy on the Lever. She seemed to understand the three kinds—so that she could tell me what kind I used when taking coals with tongs, and ashes with the shovel, shutting a door, &c., and in more lessons will do very well. After the lesson, she said “I think God has sent me good thoughts, I am very happy to day, I do not feel cross any.” I asked why she kissed me so much; she said because I love you so much; you are very kind to teach me many new things.”

The soliloquy mentioned above is only a specimen of what occurs every day, though it is rarely that one can make out what she says, because her fingers move with such rapidity as to run the signs into each other, as we unite

words with each other, and speak by whole sentences rather than by single words.

Sometimes her acts and expressions furnish themes as interesting to the poet as to the philosopher. On new-year's day when I was in Europe, she met her teacher and said, "It is new happy year day." The teacher wished her a happy new year, when she turned to the East, and stretching out her hand, said—"I want Doctor a happy new year;"—she then paused, and, turning to her teacher, said, "but Doctor cannot know I say so."

I have observed before that she has a constant sense of her relations to space, and is confused, as we are, if she loses the points of her compass.

I have sometimes questioned her about her æsthetical perceptions, but have not obtained any very satisfactory answers. Her ideas of beauty in material things are principally connected with smoothness. A round ball is not more beautiful to her than a square box, provided they are equally smooth. Freshness or newness is indeed an element, but this is evidently derived from the associations with new clothes, new shoes, &c.

With respect to long or short noses, regular or irregular features, she has no thought; and yet it is probable that a monstrously large nose would shock her, and that one as short as Dr. Slop's would amuse her; for on my asking how she would like a person with a nose not larger than a pea, she said it would be "funny."

She perceives symmetry of person, however, and is disagreeably affected by any strongly marked departure from it. On asking her if a little hump-backed girl was handsome, she said, very emphatically, "No!" Why not? said I. "Because," said she, "she is crooked;" and she imitated the motion of the child walking, and asked why she could not grow like other children. She said, a lady of her acquaintance, who is very fat and ungainly, was very ugly. Why? said I; but she could only reply that

she did not know,—that she was too large about the waist, and that “her stomach came out too quick.”

I asked her who was the handsomest lady of her acquaintance, and she replied, “*****”; but upon my pressing her for her reason, she could only say that her hands were smooth, soft, and pretty.

A cane with knots on it was less pleasing to her than a smooth one; and an irregularly knobbed stick, than one with the prominences at regular intervals. She has thus the rudiments of the æsthetic sense, but, like that of other children, its developement must depend upon education and habit. She is not yet old enough to give any satisfactory account of her own feelings on the subject.

The subject of her dreams is a most interesting one, but like many others must be passed over hastily.

One morning she asked her teacher what she dreamed about, and said, “I sometimes dream about God.” Her teacher asked, what did you dream about last night; she said, “I dreamed that I was in the entry,—the round entry, and Lurena was rolling about in her wheel-chair to exercise, and I went into a good place where God knew I could not fall off the edge of the floor.” Soon after she said, “I dreamed that God took away my breath to Heaven,” accompanying it with the sign of taking something away from her mouth.

On another occasion her teacher says, “In the hour for conversation she commenced the subject of dreaming again, and asked, “Why does God give us dreams? Last night I dreamed I talked with my mouth, did you hear me talk?” No, I was asleep. “I talked with my mouth”—and then she made the noise which she generally does for talking. I asked her how she talked—“I talked as any people in dreams.” To the question, what *words* did you dream? I could get no answer. She asked “do Spanish people dream like us? do they dream words like us?”

She sometimes is frightened in her dreams, and awakes

in great terror, and says she dreamed there were animals in the room which would hurt her. She has still much fear of animals, and can hardly be induced to touch the quiet and harmless house dog.

Aug. 19th. The last hour she asked me if she ever told me about her friends at home, and commenced an account of times when she lived there. It consisted chiefly of a history of all the animals she saw, and of which she wished me to tell her the names. She gave me a description of an animal three feet high and covered with hair curled like a sheep. I told her it was a sheep—but she said—"No, it was *much* larger and could not be." Then she told me how frightened she was when she first saw her mother open a hair trunk because she thought it was an animal. I asked her what she used to *think* about when she lived at home. She said "I could not think or talk good then. I did not know any of my friends in Pearl * Boston then." Asked her if she thought how *kind* her mother was. She said "No, I did not think she was kind for she whipped me and shook me," &c. I explained to her why she did it, and how much trouble she had caused her mother

The most important part of moral education is that of practical kindness and usefulness to others—discipline and training in acts of love, without which, precepts, preaching and books are little worth. Laura has even more need of such training than others have, for her peculiar situation is unfavorable to the growth of the moral nature.

The idea of self is developed in children as soon as they are born; any thing which affects their bodily organization, any thing which gratifies or disappoints a desire, gives them pleasure or pain without the slightest regard to its effect upon any other human being. Afterwards the circle of self is enlarged, and embraces the family, and those who by frequently contributing to the gratification of our desires seem to belong to ourselves, and whose pleasures and pains become our pleasures and pains. As the social nature is developed the circle is still more enlarged until it embraces neighbors and countrymen, in all of whose joys and sorrows, though they live upon its outskirts, the affectionate heart vividly sympathizes. But to attain this enlargement of the affections, moral education and train-

* When she first came to the School it was in Pearl Street.

ing of the feelings are necessary ; for the circle of the untrained heart must ever be very small, and it can be very sensitive only in the central point of self. And even of the well trained and the good, how few consider this circle as their moral kingdom, and strive to extend its limits till it embraces the globe and makes of their very antipodes, neighbors and brothers !

Laura has much to narrow and limit her circle ; her heart, cruelly hedged in, is forced at each remove to recur to self ; at every step she feels the chain which reminds her of its shortness. She has fewer means of exercising her sympathies than we have—we who in every waking moment have forced upon our eyes constant marks of human feeling in the countenances of others, and upon our ears constant sounds that should appeal to our hearts, for sympathy.

Any departure from the moral and healthy condition of the body ; any ail, or pain, or deformity or maim, is very apt to contract the circle of the sympathies by forcing the thoughts to dwell upon the centre of self. There are very few who can find the jewel in the head of the beast, which to the many is ever ugly and venomous.

It is said that to have perfect digestion, one should not know that one has a stomach ; and it may be added, that to have perfect health, there should not be an obstacle or hindrance to the free action of any bodily organ. Now Laura has not only much less than we have to call out and exercise her sympathies and feeling for others, but she has much more to concentrate her thoughts upon herself ; and if she should always be a generous and self-forgotten woman, it will be in spite of many obstacles ; obstacles which will be more and more formidable as with advancing years the sense of individuality will become more distinct.

It is a law of nature, that this tendency to individualism should not be strong in children ; each one has enough to impart consistency to the mass of actions which

go to constitute the character. Children are given to us like clay in the hands of the potter, and poor pottering work we often make of it! One of the most difficult things in education, either public or private, is to decide how far this tendency and desire shall be indulged or gratified. Perhaps I am not understood; let me explain by a comparison.

If it be true (and we know it is,) that the physical organization of each one of us is subject to certain influences from the physical organization of others, producing sympathies, antipathies, and the like, it is equally true that nature requires a certain independence and individuality in every organism; and no person in the sound state of health can have his bodily organism so completely overpowered by the influence of any other person, as to have the direction of its movements wrested from his own control. This ought so to be, and is; and any apparent exception to it carries *prima facie* evidence that the organism so influenced must have been in a morbid and abnormal condition. It may be that nature affixes this liability to be controlled by other bodies as one of the ill consequences of a departure from the natural condition of health—it may be something else; but it cannot be that she allowed the existence of any power by which the operation of one of her laws could be prevented. Now the moral nature has its laws of sympathy and influence as strong as the laws of gravitation and magnetism; and these laws require, that while each nature should be subject to certain general influences exercised by others, it should also retain a certain independence. Some strong minds strive to soar above these social influences, and attaining a cold sublimity of intellect, seem to move on undisturbed by human proximity; while others, swaying to and fro in the crowd of men, are moved by every wind of doctrine; they feel only as others feel, and think only as others think. But the great man, who in his icy isolation courts not human love, and heeds not human counsel, and

the little man who never communes with his lonely self, and never relies on his own intellect, have both departed from the natural and healthy condition of the soul, and it is hard to say which suffers most in consequence of it. Some teachers entirely disregard the tendency of each pupil to develop his particular individualism; they break off the sharp corners, smooth away salient points, and strive to reproduce as many and as perfect types of themselves as possible. Their pupils are like artificial trees in a "trim parterre," all cut and docked, and made to grow after one pattern. Other teachers, overlooking that tendency, neglect to repress an undue propensity, or to draw out a too feeble sentiment, and their pupils have no type at all; they are like plants in a neglected woodland, where the stunted shrub, and the gnarled oak, proclaim the absence either of nature or art in their training.

Now in Laura's case all the difficulties are very much increased; she has departed from the natural and healthy standard, and although it is not by any fault of her own, her innocence does not suspend the action of the natural law. She is withdrawn from certain natural and healthy influences, she is subjected in an undue degree to other influences; the beautiful harmony between the macrocosm and the microcosm—between the world without her and the world within her, is broken, and it might perplex a wiser man than I am to obviate all the unfavorable consequences of it upon her future character.

I should fill a volume were I to enlarge upon this subject, and I must only allude to some of the most striking causes which operate as disturbing forces in the development of her character. There is great fear that so much attention as she receives, and which we cannot prevent her perceiving without constant *management* and concealment, must have a bad effect upon her. And yet the attempt to conceal it might have an effect which would be hardly less bad than would be her knowledge of the truth.

I am afraid that she may be made vain and presumptuous by being so much caressed ; and it would be as little consolation to reflect that it was done by the kind and well meant indiscretion of others, as it would be to a father to know that his child had been spoiled by the over fondness of its mother.

I am still more afraid that her peculiar situation may have a hardening effect upon her affections. I believe I have alluded to this before, but it cannot be too much considered by those who would carefully scrutinize her character. Every body can be useful or agreeable to her in some way or other, and every body tries to be so ; but she can be of little use to them. All exercise kindly offices to her, and are themselves made better by the practice of the kindly feelings ; she is merely the recipient, and kind offices long received are apt to be considered at last as something due to one's merit, and to be claimed as a right. It is difficult to find ways in which she may have the satisfaction of being useful to others, and thus train her to habits of kindness until they shall become wants, without some contrivance which she would be sure to perceive, and which would spoil the effect. Those who have looked upon her case as an interesting experiment for ascertaining the natural character and tendencies of the human heart, must take all these things into consideration. They must consider too that the case was novel, that she was the first deaf and blind mute who had been taught arbitrary language ; that it has not been possible to conduct the experiment of her education in an entirely satisfactory manner ; that it has not been practicable to cut her off from communication with ignorant and selfish persons, as it would have been had she been secluded in the bosom of a private family. And, after making all these allowances, they will, I trust, believe that there is much which is beautiful and good in her imperfect nature.

It is true that such cases present a rare opportunity of

watching the developement of some of the feelings in comparative freedom from external influences ; but it is equally true that other influences, both of a positive and negative kind, may be exerted so as to disturb the natural growth of the mind. If in common cases the twig be bent one way, in these uncommon cases it may be bent another, and the distortion of the tree be equally great.

Lastly, the character and disposition may be partially modified by the wonderful law of hereditary transmission of peculiar tendencies. A man often transmits to a son, born after his own death, such a peculiarity of physical organization as causes that son, when grown to manhood, to startle others by a hitch of the shoulder, a twist of the features, or even an "*ahem !*" so like his father's, that the dead seems to be alive again. By the operation of a law, no more mysterious, and no less certain, a man may reap the reward, or pay the penalty, as the case may be, for the habitual exercise of any sentiment, or any propensity, by transmitting to his offspring a strong disposition for the exercise of a similar feeling.

How much Laura Bridgman, or any body else, may be influenced by such causes, no one can tell ; but they deserve to be taken into consideration by all who would ascertain precisely the effect of the privation of any of the senses, or the results of particular modes of training.

The experiment in the case of Oliver Caswell I consider to be much more satisfactory, as far as all the moral developements are concerned, than in Laura's case. He is less communicative, and has had less untoward influence exercised upon him. Though surrounded by boys, some of whom are rude and ill disposed, he has nevertheless been much under the influence of his teachers ; and a more gentle, honest, true-hearted boy exists not within my knowledge. May the maturity of both of them yield the fair fruit which the blossom of their youth now promises.

S. G. HOWE.

APPENDIX B.

OLIVER CASWELL.

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TO THE TRUSTEES.

GENTLEMEN :

I have the honor to submit the following Report upon the case of the Deaf and Blind Mute, Oliver Caswell.

He has made very slow progress in knowledge during the past year, in comparison with Laura Bridgman. He has a much smaller brain, and is decidedly of a lymphatic temperament. But besides this, he has been slightly ailing most of the time, and has never had that exuberance of health, and consequent flow of animal spirits which force her to mental activity.

He seems to be troubled by some disorder in the glandular system, or in the *primae viae*, which causes frequent indigestion, slow circulation of the blood, and consequent depression of spirits. When he is indisposed he loses his interest in his studies, and common occupations ; and his usual sedateness becomes melancholy. He seems to be aware of the cause of this, and says he must go home, and that his native air will make him well ; or if he be at home in vacation, he says, he must go back to the Institution, and his walks and gymnastic exercises will restore him. He never becomes peevish, however, but endures with uncomplaining fortitude.

But even when his digestion is good, and his physical system is in its best condition, he is habitually quiet and sedate. He is always mild and kind ; and though he does not, like Laura, lavish caresses, kisses, and other demonstrations of affection upon those about him, he has always a smile for every one who greets him, and receives any marks of kindness with evident feeling of gratitude.

He is not so fond of any intellectual exercise which taxes severely his thinking faculties, as Laura is, nor indeed as the blind generally are ; nevertheless he has gone on during the past year slowly adding to his knowledge of the qualities and relations of things, and increasing the store of words by which he expresses his thoughts, and learns the thoughts of others.

If he were naturally *talkative*, he would doubtless make more rapid progress in knowledge of all kinds. He is quite unlike Laura in this respect ; she loves talk, and if she comes in frequent relation with any person, as a semstress who may be about the house, a new domestic, or a lady visitor, she contrives to teach them her manner of making the letters of the alphabet with the fingers ; and if the person be at all clever, in a few hours the way is open between their minds, and the exchange of thought is thenceforward rapid and constant. Oliver, on the other hand, cares little about talk ; there are persons employed about the house whom he has known for three years, of whom he is very fond, and near whom he will sit or walk quietly and happily for hours ; and although they cannot say a word to him, he never attempts to teach them his alphabet, nor does he seem to care for other intercourse than the simple one by which he ascertains that they are well, in good spirits, and *fond of him*. This he does in a way which seems magical to those who do not reflect, that every state of the feelings has its natural language, and manifests itself not only upon the countenance in visible signs, and through the voice by audible sounds, but also

by certain motions of the body and limbs, and by peculiarities of deportment which are easily recognised by the sharpened sense of touch, and instinctively understood as the natural language of certain mental qualities. This has been remarked upon in Laura's case ; and it is so strong in Oliver's that it may furnish a hint to those who are curious about the moral effect of the solitary and the social system of prisons.

There is one of the household of whom Oliver is very fond, and though he cannot talk with him, he loves to be near him, and will sit quietly for hours within the circle of his physical influence. Now although this man is affectionate in his temper, he is quick in his movements, and rather abrupt in his deportment, so that it cannot be the gentleness of motion which constitutes the attraction ; yet Oliver is always happy to be with him, and strives to do things pleasing to him. This man exercises a good influence over him without speaking a word ; and merely by the gratification of his social nature.

Now suppose Oliver to be surrounded with persons whose moral tendencies were bad, whom he knew were disposed to do things contrary to the rules of the house, and contrary to his natural sense of what is right, would they not have a great influence over him for evil, even though they spoke not to him ; and would not all his tendencies to wrong, provided he had any, be strengthened and confirmed by the consciousness that those about him had the same tendencies, without the power of gratifying them ? Would not his desire for their sympathy make him conform his own feelings as nearly as possible to what he supposed to be theirs ?

Oliver is remarked by every one as having a countenance remarkably indicative of amiability and sweetness of temper ; and his face is but the mirror in which his mind is truly reflected. There have been no instances during the past year of any bad temper, or even of ill-will to

any one. This is somewhat remarkable, for he is thrown much in contact with boys, some of whom are rude and ill mannered; and one or two who are so mischievous that they sometimes try to annoy him with the petty tricks of boyhood; but he is always as calm as the sunshine.

It was observed in a former Report, that Oliver was always very honest, and that we did not know of any special instruction having been given to him on the subject; but now that he can talk about his former condition, he sometimes shows that at heart he knew how other children were treated when they took things without leave. On one occasion, his teacher says:

“ I took a book, and read a simple story about a little boy named William Morton, who took some sugar from the sugar-bowl without permission. Oliver wished to know if he was ‘ little way from my mother’s house. Man ‘ did ride far off how many miles to see William Morton?’ When I had ‘ finished, he said, ‘ He wrong, mother strike him, make noise, cry.’ I ‘ asked if his (Oliver’s) mother did so. ‘ Yes, little,’ was the reply.”

He has shown the sense of property most clearly ever since I knew him. He supposes that his clothing and his little articles of property are as much his own as his fingers and toes are. It matters not whether they were acquired by gift, exchange, or purchase; the right becomes vested in him forever, unless he of his own free will should give it up. He respects also the property of others, and has never been known to violate it, except in one solitary instance, when the temptation came in the same form which was fatal to the mother of us all. The following is an account of the affair by his teacher:

“ Mrs. Smith came and called me, saying she feared Oliver had been doing wrong, for she saw him in Mrs. Hach’s closet, at her apple barrel; she did not know that he had taken any, but feared the temptation might be too strong. I went to his room and began a conversation, hoping to lead to the subject, without direct questioning. At last I saw a stem of an apple on the floor. I picked it up, and asked who gave him an apple; he replied, ‘ Man.’ When? ‘ Yesterday.’ I asked, Did you see apple in barrel? ‘ Who told you?’ replied he, and then said, ‘ he did.’ Did you take apple? ‘ Yes.’ I asked if he was good boy? He first said, ‘ Yes,’ and afterwards, ‘ No.’ Where is apple? ‘ Gone in stomach,’ said he. Who gave



you apple? I asked. 'Hach,' was the reply. When? 'Before dinner.' Mr. H. was absent, so I could not ascertain the truth of this statement. During the whole time he was very much confused, and it is possible he may not be guilty of taking and keeping the apple, but knew I should not like to have him go into the closet at all. After talking about his being a good boy for some time, I told him he might go to make brushes. I stood at his door for some time, and was surprised to see him remain motionless by his bed. I went and told him a second time; he said 'Yes.' After a few moments I looked in again; he stood by the window, with his back towards me. I stood and watched him many minutes, and then went in to speak to him. His cheeks were wet with tears; he turned his head quickly, and tried to hide them. I asked, Why stand by window? 'I like warm sun,' was the reply, and instantly he added, 'I make brushes,'—that is, I will go to make brushes. When Mr. Hach returned he talked with him, and Oliver told him he took an apple and ate it. Mr. H. expressed his sorrow, and so did we all. Oliver felt very badly, and it was with difficulty that he restrained his tears."

No allusion was ever after made to the subject, but the lesson never was lost upon poor Oliver; if the tears were restrained, they softened his heart; if he had paid to others the penalty of stripes or chidings, he might have considered himself quit with them, and with his conscience; as it was, he repented of himself, and within himself, and has never since been known to do a dishonest thing.

The readiness of Oliver to understand all the requirements of delicacy, not to say his native modesty and innate sense of propriety, is hardly less remarkable than Laura's. One cannot suppose that any lessons on delicacy of behavior should have been given to a child of three years old, or if given should have been understood; yet he is always modest and reserved, and has been so ever since his residence with us. It is possible that by observing the fact that little boys are indulged by ladies with kisses, but forfeit their privilege by growing to manhood, he may have applied it to his own case; but I cannot help thinking that he would not so readily have arrived at the conclusion without some natural sentiment to aid him; the idea was rather evolved by the development of his own mind, than implanted there by others. Be it as it may, the following conversation with his teacher is curious. She says: "After dinner, I sat talking with him about growing to be a man. He said, 'I grow man, shave

razor, Mr. Caswell, not kiss you,'—that is, when I grow up, and become a man, and shave with a razor ; I shall be Mr. Caswell, and must not kiss you. I asked him if he would kiss his mother and sisters ? He said, ' Yes.' I then asked if he would kiss Susan ? [one of his little play-mates.] He said, ' No ! large ;' that is, Susan will be large, and I must not kiss her."

Like Laura, he always shows emotion when he is told of any thing which seems to him wrong, especially if it be accompanied by any violence. When his teacher was telling him about the anaconda's killing large animals, he was exceedingly distressed.

He is very fond of any mechanical employment, and shows great readiness in comprehending any machinery. A curious lock, a complicated door-spring, or any thing of the kind, affords him great amusement, and he will examine it with untiring patience, until he finds out all about the construction. In the work-shop he shows much ingenuity, and works with great zeal. He is fond of many boyish amusements, as holding a kite, *coasting* on a sledge, &c. His progress in the acquisition of language has been slow, and his vocabulary is still very limited, as the specimens of his writing and conversation will show. Here is a letter, composed entirely by himself the last spring, and written in a very fair, legible hand.

"MY DEAR MOTHER :

I love you very much. I will ride to see you after seventy-four nights. I will be happy glad to see you and father and John and Albert and Henry and Sister. I will ride to see you when warm summer will come. Philip will come ride me after seventy-four days. I am very well. I am fifty seven inches high. I grow fast. I and James Coolidge walk to grow fast much. Dr. Fisher will bring paper picture. I bring paper picture to you. You must put in glass paper picture. Boys and girls will ride go in Boston State House. Six hundred men to see boys. I will stay with you twenty-five nights. Good bye."

His teacher adds :

"When he had written as far as 'my dear' he asked if he should write 'my mother.' I told him this morning that it would be seventy-five days

before he went home. When he wrote seventy-four. I corrected him; he replied 'tomorrow, one day has gone.' He had before asked when the letter would be sent."

August 21st. Took Oliver to Boston and went to see the pond on the common; with this he was much pleased. We walked round it and he got quite a good idea of its shape.

August 22d. Oliver talked of our walk yesterday, the pond, &c. Taught him oval and talked of round, square, and oblong shapes. He said, "Small boy did make boat; he is sailor?" Again he asked, "Wight and I did go to see boy in boat on river, he is sailor?" Told him about carpenters and masons. Then he desired me to tell him about melons. While Frank and Susan were writing gave him some questions in Addition and Subtraction, which he performed as usual rather lazily. At 12—he wished to see "where Osborne did go on map," so I took him to the large map of the United States. He then wished to be shown Billerica, and Jamestown. He found one of the large lakes; called it a very large pond, and wished to know how many miles long and wide it was, and its distance from Boston.

August 23d. Oliver was not very well or very talkative. He complained that he took warm milk and it made his stomach sour. He was more interested in his lesson on the map than any thing else. He found all the towns he knew on the Map of Boston and told their distance and direction from Boston. Of the different directions he judges very accurately. He turned to the map of the city and asked for the frog pond—found the common and wanted to know the number of posts around it and the number of streets.

July 16. Oliver came in saying, "I see boy on piazza, has very long hair on back, you come see quick." Found a Chinese man—Oliver was very much interested and talked of little else all day. I told him about the ladies of China having small feet. He asked if they could walk, run, or make dinners; and when told some had large feet and went about to do the work, he wished to know if this man's mother had small feet.

August 1. Found Oliver engaged in glueing some boards. Gave him a lesson about the manufacture of glue. He asked—"Glue in Elephant's foot?"

At noon we received a visit from a lady who had been in China and seen Mrs. Gutzlaff's blind children. I told Oliver of it and he was much interested. He asked, "People in China have horses and cows and pigs and cats and dogs and hens?" "Lady did see boys have long hair?" Told him about sedan chairs. He asked, "men hands are hard to carry sedan chairs? Ladies have windows in chairs?" "Men in China have many windows in houses?"

He learned about Lexington on the map.

August 14. Oliver brought me a large corn stalk, as a topic for conversation. Finding it contained a sweet juice, he asked, "Men make sugar?" "Men make sugar of canes has corn?" He then told me that he made noise with stalks many nights ago.

August 20. When I went for Oliver at eight he asked "why talk?" and the first part of the hour he was rather lazy; but afterwards he became interested in talking of different trades. At ten o'clock, he tried to make conversation to defer the "*adding*" as he calls it, but when he found it must come he did pretty well. At twelve we took the map; this is an un-failing source of interest, and he adds to his knowledge mite by mite.

July 2d. Oliver's most interesting subject was the manufacture of Gunpowder, which he asked me about yesterday. I explained as well as I could to him the process and tried to instil in his mind great caution about handling it, but he said "I am not afraid of gunpowder." He inquired about strawberries and said, "I and my sister Mary did walk go up on hill find strawberries. Mary pick small strawberries. "My brother Philip

did pick strawberries tin plate full. My mother and father, and John and Sister did eat on meal cake."

September 11. At eleven we had a great deal of company, and that necessarily interrupts the regular lessons. Oliver informed me when I went for him, "Ladies have come." Did you see them? I asked. "No, I smell them." What did you smell? "Cologne."

September 12. Oliver's new knife furnished an ample topic of conversation. After he had shown me each curious part, he told me which part was the back and two sides, and asked in great glee for its head. Asked, "Hook knife in store in Boston?" "Doctor did buy far off how many miles?" "My Philip, and John, and Albert, and Henry, and sister, and father, and mother, will see my new knife after twelve days." Of the handle he asked, "Who horn?" and this led to a conversation about deers. Gave him a number of questions in addition at 10, which he performed pretty well. He is now much interested in learning some things on the map of Providence, as he thinks it relates to his own home, and wants a map to carry to his mother.

September 17. Oliver talked of kites, and I told him a story about two boys and a kite. To-day too for the first time he was interested in the subject of color, and talked nearly an hour about it. He remarked, "I talk, learn much." It is singular, but I can never get him to say he wants a thing unless he thinks he can have it. To-day, I tried it again and again. He was very desirous to write to Osborne, which he did in the following words:

"MY DEAR OSBORNE:

"Your boat go in the water will float,—stones, and iron, and lead not float. They will sink in the water. I did go in the water, and float to bathe. I am not afraid. I am brave boy. Good bye."

These extracts will give one a tolerable idea both of the simple method used in teaching Oliver, and of his usual course of thought. It will be seen that he does not yet show much disposition to inquire into causes, and indeed that he is but a little child in intellect. You must keep constantly in mind the immense disadvantage under which he labors; you must consider that his powers of acquiring knowledge are as much more limited than those of the merely deaf and dumb, as theirs are limited in comparison with ours, or else you will be disappointed with the result of the last year. The great difficulty, however, is already vanquished in his case; he has become familiar with the outline and general purpose of language, and he will now go on acquiring it in geometrical progression.

He has been under the immediate charge of Miss Eliza Rogers; and to her patient and persevering kindness he owes the improvement which he has made.

We shall, during the current year, be able to do much

more than in any previous year ; and I doubt not that with his expanding intellect he will seek as earnestly for light upon moral and religious subjects as he does now upon merely material ones. Thus far, he is pure in heart and correct in conduct ; and we hope and trust that his poor single talent may be so improved as that his mortal life shall not be a total blank in his soul's existence.

S. G. HOWE.



## APPENDIX C.

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### MISS GILL.

I found at Gosport, near Portsmouth, England, an interesting case, to which my attention had been directed by Dr. Fowler, of Old Sarum. I wrote the following account to him at the time, and I will transcribe the letter entire :

NO. 3 TORRINGTON SQ., LONDON,  
*July 26, 1844.*

MY DEAR DR. FOWLER :

The first thing I do upon arrival in London, is to sit down and give you an account of my visit this morning to the deaf, dumb and blind woman at Gosport. You must not, however, take my report for any thing more than it really is, a hasty and informal one, made after a single visit, and without time for mature reflection.

She is about 43 years of age ; of a nervous temperament ; and has a fair skin, light hair, and slender limbs and fingers.

Her cranium is of the average size, long, rather narrow, and high ; and this, as well as the activity of her movements, and her general appearance, shows that there is neither idiocy, imbecility, or any constitutional incapacity for mental development : nevertheless, she has but little more intelligence, and is but little more under human influences, than your noble dog.

She is very lean, and her chest is flat and undeveloped. One of her eye-balls has been discharged, the other is disorganised and protuberant. She is utterly without occupation, and is cut off from communion with any human soul ; and it is a piteous sight to behold her, as she sits in darkness, stillness, and desolation, rocking herself backwards and forwards, moving her arms rapidly about, making quick and almost spasmodic motions with her fingers, and ever and anon emitting a snorting noise by closing her mouth, and forcing the breath through her nose. It is more than piteous so to behold her, if we reflect that there was not, and perhaps is not any insurmountable obstacle to a considerable development of her intellectual and moral nature.

She was born deaf, and consequently remained dumb ; she had a faint glimmering of sight until she was about three years of age, when this was extinguished, and she was left in darkness as well as stillness.

Some of the lowest parts of our nature, or those which are called the animal nature, seem very active in her. It is evident that she loves life, and that she shrinks from any thing which would endanger it, although she has not, as far as I could learn, any definite idea that she must die.

She is very fond of eating and drinking, and evidently continues to take food and drink long after the feeling of hunger and thirst has subsided, merely to gratify her sense of taste ; indeed, she would injure herself were she not restrained. Her sister told me she would eat as much as all her three boys together. I myself saw an instance of her voracity. I gave her an apple, and she began to eat it, when I gave her another, and made signs for her to give it to her little niece, whom she held in her lap ; she seemed to understand me, but would not give her the apple ; upon my repeating the sign, she bit off a very small piece, and put it into the child's mouth. I then gave her four more,

upon which she consented to give the child one,\* and proceeded to eat voraciously herself. Her sister said she would eat all I should give her, without stopping, even if there were a dozen ; I feared therefore that she might hurt herself, and tried to get two of the apples away, but only succeeded by taking her hands and making her place the apples in some dough, which luckily was upon the table, and of which she understood a pudding was to be made for her dinner. The hope of getting the apples in her pudding, induced her to relinquish them.

She is very fond of beer, and I doubt not would be so of any strong drink ; her sister says, indeed, that on one occasion she got "*fuddled*," and became very much excited, jumping about, laughing, &c. Of course I could not try so cruel an experiment as giving her any exciting drink. She is very pugnacious ; and when vexed in any way, will attack a person by biting, pinching and scratching very ferociously ; moreover she will throw things at them, if they get beyond her reach, which indicates not only a sense of *outness*, but of *direction*.

It is very strange that those who gave you an account of her should have doubted her sense of property, for nothing can be more evident than her possession of it in a very high degree. It is true, as they said, that sometimes when a shilling is given to her, she puts it on the shelf, and returning after a little while, seems offended if it has not been taken away. But this is only half the truth ; she has learned that in return for coins her friends bring her fruit, cakes, &c. ; that is, when any body gives her a shilling, it is expended for her use ; therefore, if she finds it lying where she put it, she is offended. I did not see her do this, but when I gave her a shilling, she tied it up in a corner of her handkerchief, and put it very carefully away in her pocket.

\* This may be explained without attributing to her any generosity ; but see what I shall say afterwards on *numbers*.

Her sister thinks she knows the difference between the value of a shilling and of a penny ; but I could see no reason to suppose this to be the case.

Whenever she finds a pin, she appropriates it to herself, adds it to her stock, and does not give it away readily. She keeps very carefully whatever is given to her, and is very stingy ; indeed, I could not learn that she ever gave away things of her own accord.

This care of her own things, and the temper which she shows when any of them are taken away from her, or even touched by any one, is proof enough of her sense of property ; but if more were wanting, it would be found in the curious fact, that when any one has offended her, and she goes groping about to find them, if she happens to lay hold of any thing belonging to them, she will instantly destroy, or injure it. Her sister says she has known her, on being offended, to go immediately up stairs, and directly to something belonging to the offender, which she proceeded to destroy with great relish. Here is recognition of right of property in another, personification, and what is commonly called revenge.

It was difficult to ascertain whether she appropriates to herself the property of others ; but making due allowance for the partiality of friends, I infer that occasionally she does take cake, and such things, which she knows belongs to others, and that she tries to do it privately ; it seems, moreover, that she gets in a passion when detected. She is more apt to do this with things belonging to children, than to adults.

The social feeling is very strongly developed ; she does not like to be left alone, and if she ceases to feel the jar of the floor occasioned by others walking about, she gets up and feels around the room to find some one ; if she succeeds she is satisfied, though they may not take notice of her ; if she does not succeed, she becomes very much excited. She sleeps with her sister, and will not go to bed

before her, nor remain in bed after she gets up. Here is the germ of that feeling which is so strong in human nature, which may be productive of so much good, or perverted to so much evil, and which I think I remarked to you, seems to me to counteract the reform in some of our prisons. It is gratified by mere propinquity of place, and by the silent sympathy of others.

Did I relate to you the case of two old gentlemen, who, long after they had become totally deaf, used every day to walk out together, without attempting to converse, even by signs, yet who were very unhappy if any accident deprived them of this gratification of the social feeling?

Miss Gill is fond of children, and caresses and kisses them; treating them with more endearment than she shows to her sisters and brothers. She is fond also of animals, and loves to caress the cat and the dog.

I reserve for another occasion what I have to say to you on the sexual feeling, and the modifications it produces in her behavior to women or to men.

I now come to the perceptive or knowing faculties. She of course has the sense of *outness*, as Berkely calls it; and by feeling the things about her perceives her relation in space to them. She has several times been removed from house to house, and always attempted immediately to find the *bearings* of things around her. She judges distances pretty accurately, and goes to the closet, the stairs, the door, &c., with much confidence, not hesitating and groping all the way, but proceeding boldly a certain distance, and moving cautiously as she approaches the object she is in search of.

Whoever has carefully observed blind children, will have remarked their constant effort to make themselves acquainted with the localities in which they find themselves, and to ascertain all their relations to surrounding objects. They do so, not so much for any positive advantage, as to gratify an inward impulse.



Who, upon awakening in the dark, in a strange room, ever went to sleep again without making at least a mental effort to ascertain his relations in space to the things around him—the position of his bed, &c. ? We have this disposition in so faint a degree as hardly to be sensible of it ; but the blind have it more strongly developed, and use hearing, smell, and the muscular sense to gratify it ; and they attain a degree of acuteness which is almost incredible. Some animals have this disposition, and have, moreover, a peculiarity of organization which enables them to gratify it without the aid of sight or experience. It is wonderful to see with what precision they steer through the trackless air to a far distant and unknown land ; but yet it is not half so wonderful that living and organized creatures should have this property, as that dead unorganized iron should possess it, and point ever unwaveringly to the pole.

This deaf and blind mute always endeavors to learn the physical qualities of all substances which come within her reach, by means of her sense of touch, of muscular resistance, and of smell, and by those faculties whereby we judge of size and weight. She feels very carefully of things, examining every part of the surface, pressing them, and apparently comparing one with another. I did not myself see her try to smell of things, and she certainly does not use the sense so frequently as do some other unfortunates in her condition.

She takes note of time also, as is evident from some of her habits. She cannot distinguish day from night, and yet she knows when it is time to go to bed, to get up, and to do various things that recur daily at fixed hours. She lies down regularly at ten, A. M. to take a nap, and gets up just about eleven, without being called.

This capacity and desire to have cognizance of relations with time, is observable in some idiots, and even animals. With many persons it becomes an imperative

want. In some individuals the capacity is remarkably developed ; I have known blind persons who could always tell the time within a few minutes.

I asked if she could count, or had any knowledge of numbers, and was told that most certainly she had ; but by various trials I concluded that she could not count higher than five, even if she could more than three. I first gave her twelve half-pence, which she took and put away in her box. Her sister, after taking out one, made signs for her to go and get them ; she did so, and evidently was not aware that there was one wanting. We made signs for her to go and bring three pins from a pin-cushion, by showing her a pin, taking three of her fingers, and then pushing her gently. She brought three pins, and seemed gratified when we patted her in token of approval ; but when we sent her for seven, she brought a dozen, and when for five she brought seven or eight.

You recollect what I said about her giving away the apples ; while she had but two she would not part with one ; but when I put four more into her apron, she readily gave one to her sister. It will be said that she gave it away because she had more than she wanted ; but it may be said also that she did it because she could not so readily perceive the diminution of the number in her possession. She does not seem to miss a single object, when taken from a number of others similar in their qualities, as a towel from a pile of a dozen.

These and other experiments made me think she cannot count as many as five, probably not more than three. How indeed could it be otherwise, since she has no system of signs for things—no language ? Some suppose they can think of ten apples or ten pounds at a time, but it is the sign of the aggregate, *ten*, and not the individuals, which they have in mind ; without this, the mind would have to dwell in detail, and one after the other, upon each component individual object of the aggregate *ten*.

Few minds could embrace an aggregate of five individual objects at a time, without an arbitrary sign for them ; and what one is there strong enough to conceive an hundred individual objects of a kind without the aid of the sign *hundred* ? Some animals, it seems, can count as high as three, but probably not higher. You recollect the experiment with the crows. Three men crossing a field scared them away ; they alighted upon a tree, and the men entered a hut. Soon after, one man came out and went away ; the crows looked wisely down, but kept their cautious distance. A second man came out and went away, but the crows only whetted their bills on the branches, and cawed impatiently. The third followed, and as soon as he was out of sight, the birds pounced down again, and renewed their depredations. This led a curious observer to add two to the number of men, and although the crows saw five men go into the hut, they descended as soon as they had counted three come out of it. They found to their sorrow that a little learning is a dangerous thing ; and they lost their lives because they could not cypher beyond the *Rule of Three*.

Miss Gill compares things with each other, takes notice of differences, and reasons from cause to effect much more than animals or idiots. It would be tedious to mention instances of this process ; she shows it a hundred times in a day, and manifests clearly the possession of the germs of the reasoning faculties. Several things which I have mentioned show it,—as procuring fruit with money, understanding the cooking of apples, &c.

She goes to the children to get them to search for things which she cannot find, and sometimes succeeds in making them understand what she wants. She does not apply to her favorite cat and dog for this purpose, as an idiot might do if he had enough of reason to suppose that any being had more knowledge than himself. I say, if he had, for some are so completely idiotic as to be below the animals

in point of reason. If, in playing with a dog, you roll his lip over the edge of his teeth with your fingers, or force his paw in his mouth, he will begin to bite, but leave off as soon as he finds he is hurting himself. Now it is evident that he must reflect upon the process, and it seems a contradiction of terms to deny him reason. But there are idiots so utterly devoid of it, as not to know enough to relax the muscles of the jaws when by chance they have got a finger between their teeth; they continue to bite on, and to howl, biting all the harder the more they are hurt, until relieved by some other person, or until from sheer exhaustion the muscles are relaxed.

With regard to those feelings and dispositions which put us in moral relations with others, it is perhaps hazardous for me to express an opinion, because I had but a single interview with her; and my only source of information is the account given by persons unaccustomed to reflection; however, you may take my remarks for what they are worth. It seems that when she emerged from childhood she began to show fondness for dress, and to take some pains about her personal appearance; that is, to display what is usually called vanity, which in common minds is an amiable desire to appear pleasing to others, but which in more refined ones may be merely a gratification of a sense of the beautiful, without reference to any one. A sarcastic French woman said of a very neat man, who was always very well dressed—“*Il se pose même devant les mouches.*” She judged him perhaps out of her own heart, not conceiving that any one should dress himself with care except to appear well in the eyes of others. But we can conceive a Robinson Crusoe (and more easily a Miss Crusoe,) taking pains with the toilet every morning, even before the arrival of Man Friday. However this may be, Miss Gill was, as I said, fond of adorning herself in her way when young; and though I could not learn that she loved ribbons and finery,



she was observant of the form and fashion of the dress of others, and desirous of imitating them. She used to go up stairs once in the day to change her dress, and make herself tidy ; and although she has long ceased to make the change of dress, she still "goes through the motions," as her sister said ; that is, I suppose, she makes an imaginary toilet. It appears that some seven years ago, one of her eyeballs was destroyed, and the other became distorted ; and her sister supposed that this was the cause of her giving less attention to her appearance. But this is by no means certain, for we seldom see young people give up in despair about their good looks, even with the clear evidence of a looking-glass before their eyes. It is more likely that, as the developement of the disposition to appear well came with a certain age, so its subsidence came with another. She is still tidy in her dress, and will not wear a torn gown. She likes to have her clothes smooth and clean. If she takes hold of a person's hand which is moist with perspiration, she wipes her own impatiently, as if the feeling were disagreeable.

I have already touched upon the social feeling, which makes us seek the neighborhood, the sympathy, and the love of others, and shown how clearly its rudiments are developed in her.

Her mother died several years ago, and her father more recently. She was, by all the testimony I could get, much grieved and shocked, but perhaps more by the removal of the body than by the death. However, on this very curious and interesting point, I could not obtain the satisfactory information which I so ardently desired. Her own sister, who is a respectable young woman living at the Star and Garter, in Portsmouth, even had she observed her with a philosophic eye, was incapable of giving me the information, being so much affected by reference to her parent's death, that it was painful to press her upon the subject. I shall endeavor to obtain more minute information on this point



from the physician, or the clergyman who attended upon the last illness of the parents. What I was told about her being shocked, is exactly what we should expect, and what I have observed in other cases: "The soul shrinks back upon herself, and startles at destruction," not because by any intellectual process we put ourselves in the place of the destroyed or dead, but by a spontaneous feeling of repugnance which is inherent in our very nature. Animals which have never seen a lion, and which have no idea of death, shrink appalled at the sound of his roar; and we recoil at the cold and clammy touch of the adder without reasoning upon his qualities; why should we not then have a natural repugnance to those conditions of the body which nature attaches to its death? I recollect placing Laura Bridgman's hand upon a dead turkey, and noticing her involuntary recoil at the cold and clammy feel of the meat. It is no proof that this feeling is artificial because there are exceptions to it; some men may love to feel of adders, and to have spiders crawl over their faces, as there may be those idiosyncracies which are offended by the odor of a rose. I have known a man who delighted in blowing out candles, that he might inhale the fragrance of the wick; but we must judge by the rule, and not by the exception; and especially we must not forget that sensation is entirely dependent upon the condition of the organization.

We may perhaps trace in her the rudiments of that feeling of respect for others which, if fully developed, and directed upwards, would result in a religious sentiment; but the outlines are very faint. She has more respect for grown people than for children, and doubtless a perception of their superior intelligence and power. She goes to them to ask what for the children cannot give her; she obeys them when she will not obey the children. But here it ceases; as for any sense of duty to others, as to any consciousness of dependence upon God, or even of His exist-

ence, she probably has no more than the cat or the dog ; nor can she ever be made to have, without some system of arbitrary signs which shall stand her in place of language.

And here the question will recur to you, (for I doubt not it has occurred a dozen time already,) can nothing be done to disinter this human soul? It is late, but perhaps not too late. The whole neighborhood would rush to save this woman if she were buried alive by the caving in of a pit, and labor with zeal until she were dug out. Now if there were one who had as much patience as zeal, and who, having carefully observed how a little child learns language, would attempt to lead her gently through the same course, he might possibly awaken her to a consciousness of her immortal nature. The chance is small indeed ; but with a smaller chance they would have dug desperately for her in the pit ; and is the life of the soul of less import than that of the body?

I have thus, my dear Doctor Fowler, hastily sketched the principal features of this most interesting case, as it presented itself to me in an interview of some two hours. I regret exceedingly that I could not have examined it more closely, and returned to it often. \* \* \* \* \*

Very faithfully yours,

S. G. HOWE.

## APPENDIX D.

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### MARGARET SULLIVAN.

I found in the Alms-House at Rotherhithe, in the outskirts of London, another of these unfortunate cases of complicated blindness and deafness, in the person of Margaret Sullivan, a pauper. She seemed about twenty-three years of age ; but of this I could only judge from appearance, for no record of her case had been kept. I could get no certain clue to her history, for her parents were dead, her relations had abandoned her, the old inmates of the workhouse who were there when she entered had all disappeared ; the last one who was supposed to know any thing of her, was an old woman, who died the day before I visited the house ; and there stood poor Margaret, unable by word or sign to tell any thing of her story. It was known from the books of the establishment that she entered some eighteen years ago, and tradition among the inmates said that she came there in her tender infancy, and that she *cried her eyes out* because her father left her at the gate and deserted her !

I was struck by her appearance. She had a good head, a good temperament, high health, and a countenance remarkably intelligent for one in her situation. I saw at once the possibility of opening a communication with her mind ; and after obtaining permission of the kind people who had

charge of the house, I attempted to give her a lesson. She was very much amazed, as were those about her ; but in less than an hour she comprehended something of my object, and readily imitated the motions of my fingers. The next day I went to her again, and to my own astonishment, as I must confess, before the lesson was over she perfectly understood that I wished to teach her signs by the combination of which to give the name of things ; and she actually learned the letters, and became familiar with the mode of combining them, so as to say per, pin, and hat. No one of the four blind mutes whom I have attempted to teach, showed any thing like the readiness to learn as did poor Margaret. She made more progress in two hours than Laura Bridgman did in two weeks. It is true, that when I began with Laura, the whole subject was as new to me as to her, and my efforts perhaps were ill-directed ; nevertheless, I think that Margaret's natural intelligence and aptitude to learn is greater than that of Laura.

I communicated my success to the worthy and benevolent Rector of the Parish, the Rev. Mr. Blick, who was even more rejoiced than I was, and immediately began to interest himself in the case. This was just on the eve of my departure from London for America, and my engagements did not permit my giving Margaret more than a half-dozen lessons ; but during those, she quite overcame that which forms the great difficulty in all such cases ; she fully understood the object aimed at, she comprehended to some extent its usefulness, and was much pleased with the lessons.

I taught her the signs for almost all the letters of the alphabet, and she used them so familiarly that she could give the names of some twenty objects correctly when they were placed in her hands ; and when the names of them were given to her, she would select the objects from the heap and hold them up with evident pride and pleasure.

The good Rector took up the case with so much earnestness and zeal, that I cannot doubt of his final success ; and though I have not yet heard directly from him, I firmly believe that, if he is spared in life, he will one day have the satisfaction of holding conversation with poor Margaret ; and perhaps of giving her that spiritual consolation which will be doubly valuable from one of his warm and benevolent nature.

The observations which I made respecting the natural manifestation of the animal appetites and intellectual faculties correspond with those detailed in the case of Miss Gill ; they are less important because we do not know her early history so well ; but were they not so, I ought not to increase by their insertion the already too great length of this Report.



## APPENDIX E.

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### THE CASE OF ANNA TEMMERMANS, IN BRUGES.

I had the satisfaction of visiting, in Bruges, the excellent establishment conducted by the learned and benevolent Abbé Carton, who is known over Europe for the zeal and talent with which he has labored for the Blind, and for the Deaf and Dumb.

This school contains both classes, who are taught principally by ministering angels, in the guise of Sisters of Charity.

I had before seen them in all parts of the world, tending upon the wounded, ministering to the sick, in hovels as well as hospitals, and giving spiritual comfort to the dying sinner, while they wiped the damps of death from his brow; but in Belgium I first saw them managing excellent prisons for female convicts, and bringing the influence which woman can best bring for softening the heart and reforming the life of hardened criminals. In Belgium, too, I first found them engaged in the more difficult and responsible task of drawing out the intellect where its natural channels were blocked up; and in both cases saw them leading their willing charge, by gentle love and sweet importunity, as far on in the path of improvement as man by stronger but sterner efforts has even forced his.

Individual men may have subdued within themselves the love of self, and learned to turn meekly, even in spirit, the unsmitten cheek to the smiter ; but as a class or profession, they have never done it ; and Christianity owes to woman the nearest approach to perfect impersonation of its pure spirit upon earth, as it is shown in the catholic order of the Sisters of Charity.

I cannot refrain from these remarks even if they be misplaced ;—I feel that I must pay the tribute somewhere ; and certainly the most interesting thing connected with schools for the deaf mutes and for the blind, which I saw in Europe, was the part borne in their instruction by these devoted young creatures. And I was much pleased to find that a man of the Abbé Carton's talents and experience confirmed all that I believed of woman's peculiar fitness for this most difficult kind of instruction.

In this school I found a blind and deaf and dumb girl, named Anna Temmermans, aged twenty-four years, whom the good Abbé was instructing ; and in whose case he had already overcome, for the first time in Europe, the difficulties of imparting a knowledge of arbitrary language.

I say he had overcome the difficulties, because, although she could hardly form a connected sentence, she understood the nature of the arbitrary signs, and she needed only an enlarged vocabulary to enable her to communicate more freely with others.

The first public notice of this case was given in a periodical publication of the Abbé's for 1838—1839, when he had just commenced her instruction. In the same volume he gives an account of Laura Bridgman, and of the successful efforts for her instruction, which had been made in 1837.

When I saw Anna, in 1843, she was engaged in exercises precisely similar to those of Laura, in 1838 ; she had little pieces of paper, with words printed upon them, laying in heaps before her, and she selected the names for

any objects which were presented to her. She could name common objects and some of their attributes ; but she had not made so much progress in five years as Laura did in one ; and it is not probable that she can ever attain to such full development of intellect ; partly because she is not so well organized, and partly because her instruction was begun much later in life.

It was delightful, however, to see the poor thing taking so much pleasure as she evidently did in her exercises, and manifesting so much fondness as she did for her benevolent teachers, and especially towards the Abbé, who had come to her in her desolation, who had rent away, in part at least, the darker pall in which she was shrouded, and let in upon her mind a glimmer of light from without.

I heard from Anna again in 1844, and was told, by friends who saw her, that she delighted all visitors by the manner in which she repeated her prayers ; but unless she made far more rapid advance during the last twelve months, than she had made during the five previous years, her prayers must have been mere acts of imitation ; for it was impossible that she could have been told any thing about God's attributes, or about her relations to Him. The only possible way in which one can conceive that she passed, in twelve months, from an intellectual condition similar to that of a child of a year and a half old, who just begins to babble simple words, to that of a being who consciously and spontaneously bows in spirit to his Maker, is by the supposition that she must have lost the use of her organs after she had acquired the faculty of speech and the consequent development of intellect. This I believe was not the case.

## APPENDIX F.

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At Belfast, in Ireland, I heard of a deaf and blind person, whose parents resided eight miles from the city. I went out to see the case, and found a boy about 13 years old, who was born totally deaf, and who became blind at 8 years of age.

Nothing had been done towards his education, consequently he was in a piteous condition, and hadly one remove above an animal.

He was familiar with the localities about the house, and moved from room to room, and out and in at the door with ease. He knew the members of the family from strangers, and showed considerable sense of attachment. He was more fond of children than of grown folks, and kissed the baby affectionately. He had a sense of property; knew his own things, and would not take those belonging to others. He would not give any thing away except to a little brother.

My visit was necessarily very short, and as I did not find any one upon the correctness of whose observations I could rely, the information which I obtained is hardly worth recording.

I satisfied myself about his capacity for instruction, and recommended his case to the attention of some influential persons in the neighborhood; and as there is a school for deaf mutes close by, I trust that something has been done for him.

## APPENDIX G.

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The only other case of complicated deafness and blindness that has come under my personal observation during the past year, is that of a boy in the Hospital upon Blackwell's Island, in New York. He was totally deaf, and blind, and had been so, according to all accounts, from his tender infancy. It is probably the same boy whom I heard of in 1837-8, and in search of whom I spent several days.

He was afterwards taken into the New York Institution for the Blind, but discharged after a few months, being considered rather a fit subject for hospital treatment than for instruction. Since that time he has been dragging on a miserable existence in one alms-house or another, until at last his mother, whose reason had been tottering under the severe blows of adversity, but whose affection ever pointed, in the darkness and the storm, to her poor child, was put into a lunatic hospital, and he was brought to the Asylum for pauper children, where I found him in November last.

His case then seemed nearly hopeless, for, in addition to his other misfortunes, he had become bedridden. The kind people about him probably thought the best thing they could do for him was to indulge every wish; and, being ill, his only wish was to lie still. The consequence was, that instead of having a good chance to recruit his health, by gentle exercise in the open air, on foot, or in a child's wagon, he was left to lie almost all the time in bed until the tone of his system was destroyed. Instead



of rousing and stimulating his intellect by constant action of his touch, smell, taste, and muscular sense, he was left to entire mental inaction ; and the feeble flame of spirit was flickering and vanishing for want of stimulus, even before the physical machinery stood still.

I make these remarks not with the disposition to blame ; indeed the persons about him were most kindly disposed, and did all that seemed in their power ; but I make them because it seems a duty to publish, in every possible way, what is the best treatment in such unfortunate cases.

I spent some time in observing this poor creature's case ; and after he was got up and dressed, and stimulated in various ways, it was easy to see some faint rudiments of human intellect and human feeling which were apparently obliterated as he lay, a passive, breathing corse, in bed.

He was dreadfully emaciated, and so weak as scarcely to be able to totter about. He knew the general bearings of things about him, and would make efforts to go to his bed. When any things were given him, he grasped and held them, but without any effort to examine them ; it seemed like a feeble action of the sense of property, without care enough about the things to examine their qualities, or know their value. He was evidently desirous of human companionship and affection ; and it was touching to behold him as he stretched out his imploring arms to his nurse when he felt her to be near him.

Further than this, little could be learned ; for he was so feeble, that one could not bear to excite him to much manifestation of feelings. His intellect was not so much developed as that of most dogs, and he had less natural language than they have by which to manifest it.

Should this poor, long-suffering creature, continue in life, and be restored to a tolerable degree of physical health, much might be done for him, because the shape of his head and the general structure of his frame did not indicate idiocy.

A deaf and blind boy is mentioned by Mr. Chapin, Superintendent of the Institution for the Blind in Ohio, as living in that State. He has, I believe, received no instruction, and is probably incapable of being taught; for Mr. Chapin is not a person to be daunted by any difficulties which resolution can overcome.

To make the catalogue more complete, I may mention the case of Mademoiselle Morriseau, a deaf and blind mute, in Paris, whose case recently attracted so much attention. She lost her hearing in infancy, but retained her sight until she was thirteen years of age; consequently the phenomena in her case were much less interesting, in a psychological point of view. She is now dead.

It has always been supposed that persons suffering under complicated deafness and blindness must be extremely rare; but it has been my lot to meet with three of these unfortunate beings, besides the first seven mentioned in this Report. It is to be feared that there are many others whose cases are not known out of their own families, who are regarded as beyond the reach of help, and who are therefore left in their awful desolation.

This ought not to be, either for the good of the sufferers, or of those about them. It is hardly possible to conceive a case in which some improvement could not be effected by patient perseverance; and the effort ought to be made in every one of them.

The sight of any being, in human shape, left to brutish ignorance, is always demoralizing to the beholders. There floats not upon the stream of life any wreck of humanity so utterly shattered and crippled, that its signals of distress should not challenge attention and command assistance.

# ABSTRACT OF THE TREASURER'S REPORT.

Dr. Perkins Institution and Massachusetts Asylum for the Blind, in Account with P. R. DALTON, Treas. Cr.

32

| <i>Amount of various Bills paid by order of the Auditors, during the year 1844.</i>                               |             | <i>Ordinary Receipts for the Year 1844.</i>              |           |           |           |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------|----------------------------------------------------------|-----------|-----------|-----------|
| To Steward's Department, - - -                                                                                    | 5,058 32    | By Balance on hand, January 1, - - -                     | - - -     | - - -     | 10,670 09 |
| " Salaries of Officers and Teachers, -                                                                            | 4,228 84    | " Amount from pay Pupils, - - -                          | 529 00    | 529 00    |           |
| " Repairs, Carpenter and Mason work, -                                                                            | 1,062 13    | " " Interest and Rent, - - -                             | 896 45    | 896 45    |           |
| " School Apparatus and Musical Instru-<br>ments, - - - - -                                                        | 125 61      | " " State of Maine, for two<br>years, - - - - -          | 1,930 01  | 1,930 01  | 1,425 45  |
| " Insurance, - - - - -                                                                                            | 185 00      | " " State of Vermont, - - -                              | 960 00    | 960 00    |           |
| " Printing Reports, and Advertising, -                                                                            | 104 71      | " " " " South Carolina, -                                | 338 25    | 338 25    |           |
| " Medicines, - - - - -                                                                                            | 33 09       | " " " " Massachusetts, -                                 | 8,782 74  | 8,782 74  |           |
| " Stationery, - - - - -                                                                                           | 30 74       | <i>Extraordinary Receipts.</i>                           |           |           |           |
| " Truckage and Omnibus, - - - - -                                                                                 | 32 48       | " Amount for Books and Printing Press<br>sold, - - - - - | 183 72    | 183 72    | 12,011 00 |
| " Clothing, Leaders, Post Office, &c., -                                                                          | 459 21      | " Amount for Donation, - - - - -                         | 100 00    | 100 00    |           |
| " Public Stocks purchased, - - - - -                                                                              | 17,085 00   | " Do. on acc't of Legacy, J. Tidd, Esq., -               | 2,500 00  | 2,500 00  |           |
| " Lot of Land at South Boston, - - -                                                                              | 765 64      | " Do. for Legacy, Israel Munson, Esq., -                 | 4,000 00  | 4,000 00  |           |
| <i>Extraordinary Expenses.</i>                                                                                    |             | " Do. Stock of U. S. short Loan, paid off, -             | 1,036 18  | 1,036 18  | 7,819 90  |
| " Printing Department, Binding, &c., -                                                                            | 146 53      |                                                          |           |           |           |
| " On Account of building Stable and<br>Work Shop, - - - - -                                                       | 2,000 00    |                                                          |           |           |           |
| " Am't paid back to Exec'r of J. Tidd, -                                                                          |             |                                                          |           |           |           |
| " Balance on hand, - - - - -                                                                                      |             |                                                          |           |           |           |
|                                                                                                                   |             |                                                          |           |           | 31,926 44 |
| <i>Memorandum of Property owned by the Institution.</i>                                                           |             |                                                          |           |           |           |
| Long Loan, 6 per cent. U. States, - - -                                                                           | 15,000 00   |                                                          |           |           |           |
| 9 Shares New England Bank, - - - -                                                                                | 900 00      |                                                          |           |           |           |
| 20 Shares Concord Rail Road, - - - -                                                                              | 1,000 00    |                                                          |           |           |           |
| Deed of half of a House, in Summer St.,<br>The two latter being delivered by the<br>Executors of Jacob Tidd, Esq. | 3,000 00    |                                                          |           |           | \$487 26  |
|                                                                                                                   | \$19,90 000 | 1845.<br>Jan. 1, By Balance on hand, - - - - -           | - - - - - | - - - - - |           |

OFFICERS  
OF THE  
CORPORATION,  
FOR 1845.

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PRESIDENT,  
PETER C. BROOKS.

VICE PRESIDENT,  
THOMAS H. PERKINS.

TREASURER,  
PETER R. DALTON.

SECRETARY,  
SAMUEL G. HOWE.

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TRUSTEES,

|                    |   |                                              |
|--------------------|---|----------------------------------------------|
| EDWARD BROOKS,     | } | <i>In behalf<br/>of the<br/>Corporation.</i> |
| THOMAS G. CARY,    |   |                                              |
| JOHN D. FISHER,    |   |                                              |
| JOHN C. GRAY,      |   |                                              |
| OZIAS GOODWIN,     |   |                                              |
| JOHN HOMANS,       |   |                                              |
| SAMUEL MAY,        | } | <i>In behalf<br/>of the State.</i>           |
| JAMES K. MILLS,    |   |                                              |
| SAMUEL P. LOUD,    |   |                                              |
| HORACE MANN,       |   |                                              |
| ROBERT RANTOUL,    |   |                                              |
| STEPHEN FAIRBANKS, |   |                                              |

## TERMS OF ADMISSION.

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Young blind persons, of good moral character, will be admitted to the School at the rate of \$160 per annum. This covers all expenses, except for clothing.

Indigent blind persons belonging to Massachusetts, must apply to the Governor for a warrant.\*

Indigent blind persons in Maine, New-Hampshire, Vermont, Connecticut, and S. Carolina, should apply to the Commissioners for the Blind, care of the Secretary of State in the respective States, and can obtain warrants of admission.

The above charge covers all expenses of board, washing, books, musical instruments, &c. The pupils must clothe themselves, and pay their own fares to and from the Institution.

For further particulars, address S. G. HOWE—Director of the Institution for the Blind—Boston, Mass.

### \* FORM OF APPLICATION.

TO HIS EXCELLENCY THE GOVERNOR:

SIR:—The undersigned has a son (or daughter, or nephew, or niece, as the case may be) who cannot be instructed in common schools, for want of sight.

The undersigned is not able to pay the tuition at the Perkins Institution and Massachusetts Asylum for the Blind, and petitions that your Excellency will grant a warrant of free admission

And your petitioner will ever pray.





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FOURTEENTH

J. V. C. Smith  
Boston, Apr  
1846

ANNUAL REPORT

OF

THE TRUSTEES

OF THE

PERKINS INSTITUTION

AND

MASSACHUSETTS

ASYLUM FOR THE BLIND,

TO THE

CORPORATION.

---

CAMBRIDGE:

METCALF AND COMPANY,

PRINTERS TO THE UNIVERSITY.

1846.



FOURTEENTH

ANNUAL REPORT

OF

THE TRUSTEES

OF THE

PERKINS INSTITUTION

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1846.





# R E P O R T .

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TO THE MEMBERS OF THE CORPORATION.

GENTLEMEN :

WE have the honor to submit the following Report of the history and condition of the Institution under our charge during the past year.

The number of inmates, in January, 1845, was eighty-two ; during the year, twenty-two new pupils entered, while eleven were discharged, and two died, — so that the number at this time is ninety-one.

Thus there has been a regular increase of numbers, from the year 1833, when, without any apparent means of support, the first doubtful experiment of educating six blind children was tried in an obscure house, up to this period, when, firmly rooted, as we trust, in the confidence of the public, the Institution is permanently established in an edifice worthy its high objects, and extends its benefits to nearly a hundred inmates.

We can look back over this period with peculiar gratification ; and we can speak of it without indelicacy, because we claim for ourselves no peculiar credit for the success of the experiment. We have been

only the agents and almoners of a liberal legislature and a generous public. We know, too, that the blessing of God rests upon every seed of charity that is prudently sown and faithfully nurtured, however humble the husbandman to whom it is intrusted.

The very liberal appropriation which was originally made by the legislature of Massachusetts, and upon which the Institution is mainly dependent for its support and extension, has been continued yearly. We have remarked with satisfaction, that, during all the party changes, and all the periods of retrenchment, there has been no manifestation of a wish to discontinue or to lessen the grant to the blind. If any, who sought popularity by professions of economy, ever contemplated its curtailment, they stopped short of the announcement of their plan, convinced that it would not serve their ends.

In return for this liberality of the State, and in view of the interests of the blind, we have ever wished to extend the benefits of the establishment as widely as possible. We were not obliged, by the terms of the grant, to receive more than twenty beneficiaries, but we have never hesitated to admit any applicant of proper age and character. The number of pupils from Massachusetts has, for many years, been greater than twenty, and it is now thirty-seven. Indeed, the Institution is virtually open to all; and every young blind person of this State may obtain in it a course of instruction gratuitously.

The amount of money received from the State has been somewhat lessened during the last two or three years, and for this reason. There is an annual appropriation of six thousand dollars for the benefit of

this Institution, and as much for the education of the deaf mutes; but as the Asylum at Hartford charges only one hundred dollars *per annum*\* for each pupil admitted, it follows that there will be an unexpended balance, if less than sixty are sent there. Formerly the number was not over thirty; but within two or three years it has increased very much, in consequence of the Trustees of the Asylum consenting to receive pupils at an earlier age, and the money that would have been paid to our Institution has been paid to that at Hartford.

This decrease of income would have caused some embarrassment, had it not been that a few legacies were left us. But in no case could we regret that a greater number of mutes are educated; and, indeed, individual members of our Board used what influence they could to procure the increased facilities for the instruction of that most interesting class. We were confident that the State could and would provide fully both for the blind and the mutes, even if an increased appropriation should be necessary. All the other States of New England have made appropriations for the instruction of the blind; and all of them, as well as South Carolina, send pupils to our school; but as the sum charged for each does not exceed the actual cost of his maintenance and instruction, this circum-

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\* The Asylum at Hartford supports its pupils for less than the absolute cost of their maintenance; and this is a matter of strict justice, so far as State pupils are concerned, because it received from the United States government a valuable tract of public land, not as a State asylum, but as an American asylum, the only one then existing in the Atlantic States, and of course the benefits should be shared by all the States who desire it. The policy of the managers has been in accordance with this principle.

stance does not really add to the funds of the Institution. Nevertheless, although this is not a source of pecuniary profit, it is one of great pleasure, because it widens the circle of usefulness ; and it is certainly a source of just gratulation to the State to be able to offer to her sister States the means of educating their blind cheaper than it could be done at home.

Besides the regular appropriation from the State of Massachusetts, the Institution has received occasionally striking proofs of the confidence and esteem of individuals, in the shape of donations and legacies. These have furnished us with the means of increasing the comfort and extending the usefulness of the establishment ; and we hope they will be continued, because the funded property is so very small, that they furnish the only means for contingent and extraordinary expenses.

But in reviewing the fourteen years of the existence of our Institution, it is not its immediate success alone which gives us cause to congratulate the State and the Corporation ; for during that period six similar schools have been established in the United States, some of which have attained great importance and excellence, and all of which give promise of permanent usefulness. The success of these establishments, and the rapid spread of facilities for instructing the blind, are among the cheering signs of the times. They show how accessible are the hearts of legislatures and people, when appealed to in a case where suffering is unquestionable, and where the relief which is asked for cannot lead to imposition, nor increase the original evil.

It is hardly sixteen years since the instruction of



the blind in the common branches of education began to be first talked of in this country as a possible thing ; but as soon as its feasibility was shown clearly, then States and people began to vie with each other in their efforts to effect it. Pupils from our Institution have been exhibited by the Director in all the New England States, in Ohio, Kentucky, Virginia, South Carolina, Georgia, and Louisiana ; and in all of them the plans proposed for the benefit of the blind found instant favor.

Other institutions have been active and successful in creating an interest in the subject in their own and in contiguous States, so that now seven schools for the blind receive pupils from seventeen of the United States. Such success in this particular department of humanity furnishes abundant encouragement to persevere in it, and to enter upon new and unexplored fields of exertion. A deed of charity done in the spirit of love is never lost upon the doer, however it may be upon others ; and an individual or a government, if led by the right motives to engage in one work of benevolence, is blest by a greater disposition to engage in another, until that habit is formed which becomes a necessity ; for the spirit of charity, like the widow's cruise, the more aboundeth the more it is drawn upon.

The experience that has been gained during these fifteen years has been valuable in many respects ; and we think that all connected with the older institutions have learned that much more is yet to be done than they had supposed in the beginning would be necessary, before the wants of the blind as a class will be supplied. But on no subject has the experience been

more uniform, or the testimony more concurrent, than upon the necessity of providing the means of employment for such pupils as have completed their course of instruction, but who have no homes, or who cannot find work at home.

In former Reports, the establishment of supplementary institutions (so to call them) was proposed and recommended ; and we have, during several years, been trying the experiment upon a small scale ; but now that the subject is discussed elsewhere, and that other institutions are contemplating the establishment of similar departments, it may not be useless to allude to it again.

Blindness not only prevents a person from obtaining instruction in a common school, but also greatly impedes his efforts at earning a livelihood in any common way. Our school system, and the whole machinery of society, are so constructed, even in their minutest details, that they cannot work except in an atmosphere of light. If any thing is to be done beneath the surface of the earth, or where daylight cannot freely enter, the first step is to procure artificial light. As soon as the sun goes down, savages gather around their night-fires, for light as well as heat, and civilized people everywhere illumine their streets, shops, and houses. The tradesman, the artisan, the housewife, and laborers of whatever kind, depend every moment upon light ; and no one finally puts out his taper, until he is ready to compose his limbs to rest, and to close his eyes in sleep. So completely is light the life of the world, that, if at noonday there should descend sudden and total darkness over the land, every branch of industry would be as completely paralyzed as the arms of a

man smitten with palsy; the mill-wheel would be arrested, the shuttle would stop, the hammer would rest upon the anvil, the plough would stand still in the furrow; every one would grope his way in the dark to some place of security, and desire that every thing might be as stable as possible; for he would find that all motion in the dark is hazardous.

Let us imagine ourselves trying to pass one day at our usual avocations, in the dark;—not such darkness as we have at night out of doors,—for even under a starless sky, and with the murkiest clouds over head, there is still light,—but in darkness like that of a closed cell under ground, where not a ray can penetrate;—how utterly lost and helpless should we be! how many would sit down in despair, and wait for light! Nevertheless, in such darkness many of the blind pass, not one day only, but their whole lives; and yet we expect them to go out into the world, and to earn a livelihood, where all is whirl, and buzz, and motion, and where every one's safety depends mainly upon his sight.

The force of habit is indeed great, and the remaining senses are sharpened to an acuteness inconceivable by us; and by help of these a blind man may do much besides attending to his own safety; but the difficulty is, that, wherever he applies for employment of the strength or dexterity which he possesses, he finds that the whole establishment is regulated upon the supposition that every one in it can see. In the shop of the Institution, where he learned his trade, every thing is arranged with a view to his peculiar manner of working, and he may move about freely and without danger. But let us suppose that he goes

out into the world to seek employment ; if he is a weaver and enters a manufactory, he is liable to be torn in pieces by the machinery ; if he is a cabinet-maker, and goes into a common shop, he stumbles over the workmen who are seated upon the floor, and perhaps treads upon their open tools ; if he is a mattress-maker, and goes into an upholsterer's shop, and gropes about the work with his hands, he is liable to have them clipped by the shears of the workmen, who never imagine that any one would thrust his fingers between the blades.

Besides, the blind man going to and from his place of work, or varying from his usual course of work, has constant need of some one with eyes to guide him ; and although the passers-by or his fellow-workmen are ready to help him upon occasion, it is not well for him nor for them that he should be continually dependent for such services.

It will be seen at once, that, in all that respects the physical and external relations of man, the deaf mutes have an advantage over the blind which goes far to compensate for the superiority of the latter in moral and intellectual capacities, and which, in an age or in circumstances where outward and incidental advantages are preferred to intellectual and moral ones, makes their lot preferable. In all his external relations with other men, in all the daily walks of life, the deaf mute makes use of the same senses which they do, and performs a thousand acts in common with them. If he has learned a trade in an asylum, and goes out into the world, he finds everywhere brethren of his craft working with the same tools and guided by the same sense which he depends upon ; — he can wield

the hammer, handle and direct the awl, with as much force and precision as they can.

When it comes to interchange of thought, and expression of nice shades of emotion, then it is that the mute finds he is as it were among a foreign people, whose language is incomprehensible to him, and who can use his either not at all or but very imperfectly.

The blind man, on the contrary, though he can have the fullest intellectual communication with others, though he can express and understand the most subtle definition of thought and the most delicate shades of feeling, cannot well coöperate with others in the simplest handicraft, because the sense upon which they depend is to him wanting.

So true is it that for a wealthy person blindness is a much lighter calamity than muteness, while to a poor man it is a much heavier one.

The safest and best way for a blind man is to work alone; but to this there are many and serious obstacles, because, let him choose whatever branch of industry he may, he finds that it is organized wholly with a view to combined labor, subdivided to the greatest possible extent. The simplest trade is divided among many, who work separately, yet with a common end in view. Even a shoe has its cutter, its sewer, and its binder. The journeyman, as a sort of equivalent for his low wages, has usually no care about providing his stock or selling his work; he has no loss of time, and no responsibility for success; but the blind man has all the disadvantages of the journeyman, with none of his advantages, because he must do every thing for himself or pay others for doing it. A contractor or an overseer might undertake



to attend to the work of a dozen blind men, but he could not afford to do it for one or two, and vary his usual course of business to conform to their mode of work.

These difficulties are increasing every day as the division of labor is carried farther; as machinery usurps the province of handicraft, and tireless sinews of iron do the work of human muscles. It is not long ago that in various branches of work there were wheels to be turned by men or boys, who relieved each other every hour; but such wheels are rarely to be found now; they revolve by a power which needs no relief, and which does its work more evenly than men could do it. So of other work; if it was simple enough for the blind to do, a man of wood and iron, who wants neither food nor wages, has been made expressly to perform it.

It is well known that a blind man can make tolerably good shoes; and half a century ago the modes of making them, and the prices paid for them, were such as would have given him a fair profit. Indeed, it may still be, that in the interior of Pennsylvania \* the coarse shoe-work of the blind is profitable; but wherever the name of Lynn is known, the blind shoemaker must vacate his bench.

There are very few kinds of handicraft at which the blind can work profitably, and these few are growing less, because the vast amount of intellect which is brought to bear upon the simplification and perfection of this branch of human employment does

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\* Some of the pupils of the Institution at Philadelphia are taught to make shoes.

not take into view the few isolated blind men, but contemplates that all the living agents who tend the machinery which it invents shall be men with all their senses about them.

Besides all this, when the blind man has selected an employment which gives him the best chance of profit, still he labors under the great disadvantage of want of capital. A large establishment buys at wholesale, and can retain its goods through seasons unfavorable to their sale; but an isolated blind man must buy his stock at retail prices, and sell his work as soon as it is done, be the market what it may, — for his daily bread depends upon it. It is true that some succeed, and earn a tolerable livelihood, in spite of these obstacles; but they are either assisted by relations and friends, or they are persons of such remarkable capacity as to form exceptions to the general rule.

The blind, then, have two great obstacles in the way of earning a livelihood; the first is the want of that advantage which sight gives to a workman; the second is that all the usual arrangements for work are adapted to a sense which they lack. The first obstacle is insurmountable; the second is not, and it is with the view of overcoming it that we have for several years been carrying on a department which must be considered as supplemental to the main purpose of the Institution; namely, our Work Department. This has been struggling along many years under manifold disadvantages; such as the difficulty always attendant upon new enterprises, the inexperience of the blind themselves, the incredulity of the public about the capacity of the blind for becoming

good workmen, and, finally, the necessary expense of carrying such an enterprise through its early stages.

These obstacles, we believe, are so far overcome, that reasonable assurance may be given of the permanency of the department.

During the past year, there have been twenty blind men and seven young women furnished steadily with work, and paid regular wages to the amount of \$1,459·87. This, we think, is very important; the money thus paid to twenty-seven blind persons was not given or received as alms. It was money for which they had worked hard, and which they well deserved. It will do them vastly more good than if it had been bestowed in charity; for it will incite them to industry in future, and perhaps induce others to follow their example. Most of them were formerly pupils of ours, but three of them are from other institutions, from which they were discharged with a knowledge of mere handicraft, but without place or means for exercising it. Besides this, the shop has paid its own rent, for all its stock, and several hundred dollars for overseeing and incidental expenses. The sales have been greater during the past year than in any former by the sum of \$3,437·74, and the balance at the end of the year in favor of the shop was \$13·81.\*

But though no money has been drawn from the treasury, the shop cannot be said, strictly speaking, to have defrayed its own expenses; for though the workmen pay a small sum for their board, and this is

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\* See Report of the Auditors of Shop Accounts, January 1, 1846. Appendix, A.

deducted from their wages, this sum is not passed into the general treasury. The Institution, then, gives to the shop the amount of the cost of the board of the workmen ; but it is at no other charge for the work department.

We believe that even this charge may be diminished until it ceases, and that the workmen may have the unmitigated satisfaction of supporting themselves entirely ; and the reasons for this belief are grounded in the fact of their greater skill, and the regular increase of the demand for their work. The sales during the past year have been larger than in any former year ; and the list of patrons of the shop contains the names of some of our most valuable citizens.

It is desirable, in every point of view, both for the blind and the public, that the work should recommend itself, and that the purchasers should feel that they are getting a fair return for their money ; and this will be the case, if, as an equivalent for any want of mere neatness of finish, regard be had to the purity of the materials, the strength and durability of the work, and the readiness to make good any deficiency.

We would, therefore, heartily recommend the continuance and extension of this department, so that those meritorious blind persons who have completed their education in the school and learned a trade, but who cannot find employment at home, may be supplied with work upon moderate wages. To this we see but one material objection, and that arises from the following considerations. As a general principle, all establishments which break the family tie are, so far, objectionable ; and with all their advantages, such as economy of labor, they are attended by evils. These

evils are borne with, in the case of boarding-schools for separate sexes, for the sake of the economy of living and of teaching, for the advantage of the natural and proper emulation, &c. ; and we have shown, in former Reports, how much benefit young blind persons derive from such association ; but with the adult blind, all these advantages diminish, while the disadvantages increase.

Should our work department be continued, in the course of a few years there will be at least fifty workmen employed in it. If they all board in the house, they must be governed by certain rules, subjected to certain restrictions, and give up a part of their individual independence ; this is necessary in all large establishments, and is readily submitted to by youth, but is very irksome to adults.

But the worst feature of the case is, that they must be kept together, they must work together, and live together. Now boys and girls may for a while be treated in masses, and deprived of the favorable influence of family ties, without any permanent injury to their natures, perhaps, but adults cannot. Whenever men or women do so congregate, and live apart, whether in barracks, on shipboard, in monasteries, or in nunneries, the evil effects become very obvious. We cannot suppose the blind would escape those influences ; indeed, experience shows that they do not escape, and we believe that the clannish and selfish spirit which is so obvious in the great establishments for the adult blind in Paris and Naples is probably attributable to the causes above alluded to.

In order to obviate these unfavorable effects, and to give the blind what they need more, perhaps, than any



other class,—the softening influence of the family circle, and the advantage of wider intercourse with seeing people,—it is desirable that they should board separately, or a few together, in families in the neighbourhood, and come to the Institution daily to their work, for which they should receive payment in cash, and defray their own expenses.

This plan would not only prevent the formation of a clannish spirit, and lead to a better acquaintance with the world, but it would obviate the danger of the Institution's becoming burdened with drones. If the rule were rigidly observed, none would remain except those who could really earn their own livelihood; and this certainly is desirable; for, although it may seem hard to refuse work to those who, from feebleness of body or mind, are unable entirely to support themselves, yet it must be done, else in the course of years there will be a collection of feeble and inefficient persons, exercising upon each other, and upon their associates, a pernicious influence. This Institution never was intended for, and never should become, in any sense, a mere asylum. Besides, the proper place for such persons is at home, in the charge of their relatives, or of the town.

If a fund could be established which would yield a regular and permanent income of \$2,500, it would secure to nearly fifty blind persons the means of supporting themselves, independently of any other aid. Such a fund would, in reality, constitute an independent establishment, and might be made useful through coming generations.

It may be added, that the institutions in New York and Philadelphia are preparing to make some arrange-

ment similar to ours for the employment of those who have finished their course of instruction. We are glad to find that their experience on this point accords with our own.

Finally, we would have it understood, that, although we believe the establishment of a large workshop, which should furnish employment to the blind upon favorable terms, would be of great benefit to them as a class, yet we would not have it offer such attractions of comfort, or such advantage of terms, as would induce those to congregate in it who might otherwise find some nook in society which they could fill with advantage to themselves and to others. This would be at variance with a sound principle of eleëmosynary administration, and would prove, that, even when extended towards the blind, public benevolence tends to produce public evils.

We have, in former Reports, set forth the great importance of books with raised letters ; other institutions have done the same ; and the most intelligent persons engaged in the instruction of the blind have advocated their multiplication, and yet the number remains very small. This is singular, because there is nothing which so moves the visiter of a school for the blind as to see children open their books and read with their fingers. Whenever there is a public exhibition, the audience look on the preparations with a doubtful eye, and to the array of sightless beings with feelings of compassion amounting to pain ; but the moment they take their books, and, running their fingers along the lines, begin to read aloud, there is a mingled feeling of relief and admiration, which shows itself in smiles and tears. There is hardly a person

who can witness this, for the first time, without deep emotion. It has been so witnessed, and its effect so felt, by scores of legislative bodies, and hundreds of audiences throughout the country. It is certain that the simple reading, by blind children, of a few lines from a book did more to create and endow the institutions now existing in this country than all other things put together ; and yet it is as certain, that, until the Bible was printed, only four years ago, the perusal of the books then in existence was hardly worth, to a blind person, the labor of learning to read, had it been certain that no more would be printed. Our Director has often said, when conducting such exhibitions, that he should have been practising an imposition upon the public, if he had not hoped and expected the result would be such a multiplication and improvement of books as would prove a real resource and advantage to the blind.

But notwithstanding so many American institutions owe their existence mainly to a few leaves of embossed paper, yet none of them, except that at Philadelphia and our own, have ever made provision for the multiplication of books. Even the press at Philadelphia has now stopped, and our own has stood still much of the time during the last three years, for want of means to go on. We do not say this in the slightest disposition to reprove ; we know too well the expense and difficulty of fitting up a printing establishment. We know that all the books for the country might be printed at one institution, and that the others would patronize the enterprise as fully, and get their books much cheaper, by purchasing than by manufacturing them ; but the trouble is, THEY CANNOT BE BOUGHT, for THEY ARE

NOT IN EXISTENCE. There have not been twenty works of any real and permanent value to the blind printed in the English language ; of these, four fifths have been printed at our press, and the rest at Glasgow and Philadelphia.

It is known that the regular funds of the Institution cannot be devoted, to any extent, to a work which is so general in its character, and which belongs as much to all the institutions for the blind as to one ; and Dr. Howe, who has mainly carried on the enterprise, made an appeal to the benevolent through our last Report, and proposed, if it were answered, to publish some works of science, and to commence the publication of a cyclopædia of general knowledge. The appeal was answered generously by a very few individuals ; and an edition of Olmsted's Natural Philosophy, and of Smellie's Philosophy of Natural History, was printed. The first and second volumes of the Cyclopædia were also completed ; but here the enterprise was suspended for want of funds.

The works thus published are probably of more value than any others ever printed for the blind (saving always the Bible) ; and the Cyclopædia, if it can ever be finished, will be of still greater importance. It must necessarily be expensive, but we trust that some benevolent and wealthy persons will furnish the means of carrying it through. We subjoin some extracts from letters received from blind persons in different parts of the country, showing their sense of the value of the books in question.

Two other books of considerable size have been embossed at our press during the past year : "The Book of Common Prayer," which was paid for by gen-



tllemen in New York ; and the "Guide to Devotion," a work published by the Presbyterian Board of Publication in Philadelphia. These books were printed here merely to oblige the gentlemen interested in them; and at the absolute cost.

For a particular account of the finances, we refer the Board to the Report of the Treasurer, which is herewith submitted. The funds on hand, January 1, 1845, were \$ 20,787.26 ; besides the regular income, the Treasurer received \$ 5,000 from the estate of John Parker ; and the property on hand at this time is \$ 24,604.09. Mr. Peter R. Dalton, who so acceptably filled the office, having resigned it during the last year, Mr. T. B. Wales, Jun., was appointed in his place *pro tem*.

The various inventories required by law are herewith submitted.

It will not be necessary for us to go into a detail of the system of instruction pursued during the last year, for it is only a continuation of that followed in former years, and with the same general success. The daily exercises commence at six o'clock in the morning with devotional service, and continue until eight in the evening, the time being occupied with study, work, and music, alternately. This is found more advantageous than to crowd the instruction into two sessions of three hours each. The rule is, to confine the pupils but three quarters of an hour at a time at any study, and then, after a short recess, to change the subject. This prevents any feeling of weariness or satiety ; and, as a general thing, the scholars hear the bell which calls them into school with about as much pleasure as that which is the signal for dinner. The



instruction partakes the character of familiar lectures ; and the pupils are encouraged to ask questions, so that the lesson becomes sometimes a colloquy.

During the past year, the Institution lost the valuable services of Mr. Hach, who had for several years been principal teacher of music, and general assistant. He returned to his native country, Germany, with his family, much to the regret of those who had known him here ; and we are glad of an opportunity of publicly expressing our high regard for him as a man and a teacher. He has been succeeded by Mr. A. Werner as teacher of music. The other teachers are young ladies from the State Normal Schools, who are assisted by two blind persons, formerly pupils.

All the teachers, and the persons employed, have given satisfaction ; and the conduct and improvement of the pupils have been such as to afford us especial gratification.

The two blind mutes, Laura Bridgman and Oliver Caswell, whose instruction is of course entirely different from that of the other pupils, have been making very satisfactory progress. They each of them require special care, and the almost undivided attention of a teacher. They continue to be most interesting persons in their way ; and would be distinguished anywhere, among youth with all their senses, for their happiness, gentleness, affection, and truthfulness.

Such results, produced under cruel privations and untoward circumstances, which would seem calculated to crush the affections in the bud, and to make the sufferers morose and selfish, are of more importance to them than all the knowledge they have acquired, or can ever be made to acquire. They are important also

to others, by showing the capacity of humanity for good as well as for evil, by exemplifying the power of education, and by proving that the elements of happiness are within ourselves, and independent of external circumstances; — that, when the intellect can have exercise, and the affections find food, and conscience reign supreme, there contentment may bloom continually, and joy blossom in its season.

For a more particular account of these cases, we would refer the Corporation to the special Reports of the Director, which will be found in the Appendices.

Finally, we would commend the Institution, and the interests of the blind, to the special notice and care of the Legislature, of the Corporation, and of the public. They still have, each and all, important duties to perform; the establishment still requires their care and their encouragement, for it has not yet reached its highest point of usefulness; and it can never do so without the hearty coöperation of all upon whom God lays the responsibility of its success.

All of which is respectfully submitted.

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AT the annual meeting of the Corporation, held January 12, 1846, the President, Peter C. Brooks, in the chair, the foregoing Report of the Trustees was accepted.

Attest,

S. G. HOWE, *Secretary*.



## APPENDIX A.

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BOSTON, January 12th, 1846.

*To the Trustees of the Perkins Institution and Massachusetts  
Asylum for the Blind.*

GENTLEMEN :

THE undersigned, committee for the examination of the property and accounts of the shop department, has attended to that duty, and respectfully submits the following

### REPORT.

The books have been examined with much care, from the date of the last examination to the 1st instant, and found correct. There was a short period, subsequent to Mr. Hach's departure, during which the books were kept by a person who proved incompetent to the duty, and who was discharged. With this exception, the accounts have been kept with much accuracy. The cash account has been examined, and found correct, with all the vouchers for the disbursements.

Your committee has made a very careful examination of all the property belonging to the shop department, which was found to correspond with the account rendered. The following abstract is submitted, to show the result of the business since April 1, 1845, at which time the undersigned made a detailed report of its condition.

*April 1, 1845.*

## ASSETS.

|                                           |             |
|-------------------------------------------|-------------|
| Stock on hand, tools, &c., per valuation, | \$ 1,866 44 |
| Cash,                                     | 510 82      |
| Debts due shop, good,                     | 575 15      |
|                                           | <hr/>       |
|                                           | \$ 2,952 41 |

## LIABILITIES.

|                                   |             |
|-----------------------------------|-------------|
| Debts due from the shop,          | \$ 799 54   |
| Due the Institution, for capital, | 3,750 26    |
|                                   | <hr/>       |
|                                   | \$ 4,549 80 |
| From which deduct the assets,     | 2,952 41    |
|                                   | <hr/>       |
| Balance against the shop,         | \$ 1,597 39 |

*January 1st, 1846.*

## ASSETS.

|                             |             |
|-----------------------------|-------------|
| Stock, tools, &c., on hand, | \$ 2,380 72 |
| Cash,                       | 215 63      |
| Debts due the shop, good,   | 1,577 39    |
|                             | <hr/>       |
|                             | \$ 4,173 74 |

## LIABILITIES.

|                                          |             |
|------------------------------------------|-------------|
| Debts due from shop,                     | \$ 2,136 17 |
| Due the Institution,                     | 3,621 15    |
|                                          | <hr/>       |
|                                          | \$ 5,757 32 |
| From which deduct the assets,            | 4,173 74    |
|                                          | <hr/>       |
|                                          | \$ 1,583 58 |
| Balance against the shop, April 1, 1845, | \$ 1,597 39 |
| "      "      "      Jan. 1, 1846,       | 1,583 58    |
|                                          | <hr/>       |
| Gain,                                    | \$ 13 81    |

Thus it will be seen, that, instead of a loss, the shop has gained in the last nine months \$ 13.81.

When we consider that nothing has been drawn from the treasury during the past year for the support of the shop, that



it has paid the rent, and employed twenty-seven blind persons, to whom it has paid in cash \$ 1,459.87, this result must be most satisfactory. Your committee considers this the most effectual, and least objectionable, mode of aiding the blind. While it stimulates to industry, and induces economy, it cultivates their self-respect, and gives them very important pecuniary aid, without adding the depressing weight of alms to the already grievous load of their sufferings. Some of the workmen and women have been enabled to lay up a little money, which will be a nucleus around which they may gather more, and be making provision for old age and consequent infirmity.

Among the applicants for work during the last year have been several from the New York Institution for the Blind, — a few of whom have received it. The Trustees of that Institution visited our shop during the last year, with a view to establishing something of the same kind. Your committee most sincerely and earnestly recommends the continuation and extension of this department of the Institution, as a charity of deep interest, well worthy the consideration of its friends and patrons. The business has been steadily increasing, and last year the amount of sales was \$ 3,437.74 more than the preceding year. In order to provide for the probable wants of the year on which we have entered, more room will be required in the sales department ; and your committee recommends that the room now used for an *office* be given up, in order to enlarge the sales room ; and that the room in the next story above, which can be had for \$ 60 *per annum*, be hired for an office.

Your committee would further say that a large covered shed should be provided at the Mount Washington House, in order to accommodate the increasing business of working on old mattresses and feather-beds.

Respectfully submitted,

STEPHEN FAIRBANKS, *Committee.*

## A P P E N D I X B.

LAURA BRIDGMAN.

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### TO THE TRUSTEES.

GENTLEMEN :

MY Report concerning this interesting pupil for the last year will be shorter than usual, because I intend to publish soon a continuous and complete account of her whole course of instruction.

This seems to be called for by the public, who, in various countries, have manifested such a kindly interest in her case. The accounts of her instruction contained in our previous Reports have been translated into several languages, and extensively read. But it is impossible to do justice to such a subject in detached papers, published annually. Besides, the series of those papers is not perfect ; large editions of some of our Reports having been completely exhausted by the demand.

The importance of the case in a psychological and moral point of view justifies the attempt to put it upon permanent record. It is due also to the many kind and excellent persons who have manifested their sympathy for the child, and in various ways encouraged her teachers to perseverance in the attempt to overcome all the obstacles to the full development of her imprisoned soul. The account of her progress during the last year will therefore be general and concise.

Her health has been good, until within the last three months, during which time her appetite has become impaired, she has lost some flesh, and has grown feeble. I have not

been without apprehensions of serious consequences ; but as there is no appearance of any organic disease, it is reasonable to hope that the functional derangements will yield to judicious treatment.

The danger of the great and continual activity of her brain and nervous system has never been lost sight of ; and constant care has been taken to guard against its evil effects, by exercise, and by amusements calculated to diminish it. But it may be, that, in spite of our efforts, her system has suffered from this cause.

In the normal condition of the body, the constant hungering and thirsting of the youthful mind for knowledge is gratified by the spontaneous and pleasurable exercise of the perceptive faculties. The child has only to open his eyes and learn every day and every hour new combinations of form, dimension, size, color, distance, and motion among the innumerable objects around him. His ear and his other senses impart to his mind a thousand sensations, which, by a natural process, the mind in its turn attributes to external objects. All this process is one of learning ; the result of it is knowledge, — knowledge more varied and more valuable than any which a teacher can ever impart. It is the gymnastics of the mind ; and by virtue of that beautiful law which commands pleasure to attend all natural exercise, it becomes both delightful and health-giving.

But what to other children is spontaneous activity or pleasant exercise is to poor Laura severe effort and fatiguing labor. They see external nature as through a glass, and learn a thousand things at a glance ; — she has to break through a wall, and to examine every quality of every object by a slow and tedious effort. It is true that she takes delight in the effort, and has to be withheld from, rather than incited to, making it ; but, although there may be the same proportion between the degree of effort and the amount of pleasure as in other minds, yet both are in excess ; and excess in any thing is injurious.

It has always been strictly charged upon her teachers, and

I am sure never forgotten by them, that they are to guard against too great mental activity. But it is almost impracticable to prevent her from studying, for her common conversation is in the spirit of inquiry ; so that it is possible her physical health has suffered from it. She will not admit that she is unwell ; indeed, she probably conceals from herself the fact that she is so. But, from whatever cause her present indisposition has arisen, every effort will be made to remove it. She has already learned to ride on horseback, and takes gentle exercise in this way, every day, upon a pony, which, of course, has to be guided by a seeing person.

Her mind has developed itself during the last year in a remarkable manner, as will be seen in the specimens of her writing and conversation. It is very fortunate that I was able to obtain as a successor to Miss Swift, her former able and excellent teacher,\* a young lady fully equal to the difficult task of conducting her education. Indeed, to Miss Swift and Miss Wight belong, far more than to any other persons, the pure satisfaction of having been instrumental in the beautiful development of Laura's character.

The last year, especially, has been one of great difficulty and great danger ; for the period has arrived when the natural tendency of every human soul to separate and independent individualism becomes very strong ;—that critical period when there is often a severe and sometimes a fatal struggle between the conservative spirit of the old, who would stunt the growth of the young and keep them in the dependence of childhood, and the aspiring spirit of the young, which irresistibly impels them to independence.

I have always looked forward to this period of Laura's life with great anxiety. She is now passing through it ; and it is not given to me to conceive any wiser course than her present teacher has followed. Indeed, I believe that no one has con-

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\* It is possible that some remarks in my last Report may have been construed into censure of Miss Swift ; but they were not intended for that effect. She fulfilled her duty with ability and conscientiousness.

ceived so high an idea of woman's patience, devotion, tenderness, and capacity, that it would not be raised, if he could see as minutely as I have seen the whole of them exemplified in the daily intercourse between Miss Wight and Laura. Any praise of this kind bestowed by one person upon another, who is in any way connected with him, is usually in bad taste, to say the least. But I am constrained to give it in this case, because I feel, that, unless I do so, I shall receive — what does not belong to me — the credit of another's good works.

There have been a few moments during the year, when, either from the developing tendency to independent individualism above alluded to or from constitutional irritability, or both, Laura has manifested a spirit which threatened violent explosions of temper. I am certain, that, if at such times she had been treated with the slightest sternness, or even with coldness and indifference, the effect would have been most unfavorable. But her teacher, never for a moment losing her temper, never ceasing to manifest the tenderest interest in her pupil, yet not *obtruding it upon her*, or making it the pretext for overruling her will, has succeeded in making Laura *judge and condemn herself*; so that, without being accused, she has perceived her fault, and, without being punished, she has come out of the trial stronger and better than before. This I hold to be a rare attainment in the art of teaching; — it is more, — it is the best kind of moral training.

It will be seen by the extracts which will follow, that Laura has acquired much greater facility and copiousness of expression than before; nevertheless, a great portion of the year has been spent in teaching her the use of language. It is often said, that, in order to have precision of language, there must be precision of thought; but the converse is equally true, — in order to have precision of thought (over a great range of objects), there must be precision of language. Hence appears the great importance of storing the mind abundantly with words to which a precise meaning is attached, during that period of life which nature clearly points out as the only one well fitted for the task, namely, the period of childhood and early youth.



It may be proper here to remark, that, whenever any expression of hers is quoted in the Reports concerning her, it is done with a sense of the importance of a scrupulous adherence to the exact form which she used ; no change and no correction is ever made, not even of the orthography.

I shall endeavour to make the extracts illustrate the mode of teaching her, as well as her own course of thought.

One day, her teacher had remarked to her that the first settlers of this country sometimes had difficulty in procuring enough to eat ; whereupon she asked, suddenly, " What repast did one man eat ? " She explained herself by adding, " When there was but one man on the earth." The answer was, that there were fruit and berries. " But," said she, " when he was very small ? " She paused awhile, and then added, " I guess God took care of him, and gave him some milk."

Her teacher was reading, the same day, something in which a compass was mentioned ; upon which, she was desirous of knowing all about it. Her teacher showed her a magnet, and applied it to a toy in the shape of a swan floating upon the water. When she felt the bird to be attracted by the magnet, her face grew very red, and she said, much surprised, " It makes it life ; it is alive, for it moves." Her teacher then asked her if the bird ate, or slept, or walked, or could feel. " No," she replied ; but still seemed hardly convinced that the magnet did not give life to the bird, until she was shown its effect upon a needle.

This led to an explanation of attraction ; and she soon afterwards showed her disposition to apply all new words in as many senses as she can, by suddenly embracing her teacher, and saying, " I am exceedingly attracted to you, because you are always so kind."

A little reflection upon the mental process by which she converted a term expressive of a physical relation into one expressive of a mental emotion will explain the difficulty which many persons find in understanding how she ever learned abstract terms, and words significative of mere emotions.

Laura, of course, cannot convert those terms which usually express physical relations into terms expressive of moral relations, so easily as other young persons can ; but in her case, as in theirs, the mental process is a natural and almost involuntary one. All children go through it without any special instruction, and use metaphorical language long before they know what a metaphor is.

The teacher plays a much humbler part in the intellectual development of children than he is usually supposed to do ; his influence in the formation of moral character may be greater ; but too often he labors upon the former to the neglect of the latter.

On the same day above referred to, she was speaking about something which recalled the past, and asked, " Why was I not always so good ? " Not receiving an immediate answer, she added, " People cannot always do right, as one man did who lived many years ago. Doctor says nobody ever does right always, as Jesus Christ did." Her teacher told her that we must always try to do perfectly right, and then we should grow better and better. She then asked, " If we are perfect, shall we be like God ? "

The following extract from her teacher's journal will show how minutely her little faults are noted and how they are treated.

" *Sunday, Nov. 10th.* Laura went to church with me in the morning. In the afternoon, I left Jane Damon with her, with permission to stay a short time. When I returned, Laura did not welcome me as usual, and made some objection to a walk which I proposed ; but she was soon ready for it. I learned from Jane, that Laura had done something that she (Jane) had promised not to tell me. I asked Laura why she was not willing that I should know every thing that she did while I was away. She said, ' I was afraid you would reprove me.' I asked her if I ever spoke unkindly to her when she had done wrong. ' No,' replied she, very emphatically, ' you never blame me. Why did I pull the wire ? ' I answered, that I thought curiosity and playfulness made her do it ; that it was not wrong to be curious and playful ; but that it was wrong to try to conceal from me when she thought she had done mischief. ' I did not know it was to conceal,' said she. I told her that it was best for me to know what she did and thought, that I might be able to advise her. ' I

knew it was wrong to pull the wire.' Jane had told me also that Laura was unwilling that she should leave her, and made several very unpleasant noises. I alluded to this when talking with Laura, and she said, 'I was not impatient.' 'But,' said I, 'Jane said you made some bad noises.' 'I did n—,' she began to say, hesitatingly; when I said, 'Did you not make noises?' and she replied, 'I believe I did not refrain from making bad noises.'

"I was now obliged to leave her for a short time. When I came back, she was not inclined to say much, and seemed trying to force a smile. By this time, the headache which had followed me all day became quite severe, and I left her again for a while to her reflections. It is the first time that she has attempted to deceive me. She was afraid, perhaps, that she had done some injury to something. She could have no fear that I should speak severely to her, for I never blame her in the least. Generally, when she is doing or saying any little thing that I disapprove, I simply stop it at the time, and afterwards speak of the thing abstractly. She will apply my remarks to herself and to the circumstance, but without any unpleasant excitement of feeling, and she remembers them a long time.

"Many times she has said, 'I cannot be perfectly good, as Jesus Christ was.' I have told her that every one should try to be perfectly good, and never be willing to do wrong even in a little thing, — explained to her that perhaps it was a desire to *appear* perfectly good which prompted her to conceal that which she was afraid was wrong.

"When I spoke to her again, she said, 'I was praying to God, and told him that I had been so wrong, and I asked him to forgive me and send me better thoughts. I told him my motives were bad to conceal from you, and to tell you that I did not make impatient noises.' She then put her hand on my hot head and asked what made it worse. I answered, 'Sad thoughts.' She said, 'I am sorry you were detained from being happy by a sad circumstance. I have told God that I will not do so wrong again.' "

Here is another extract illustrative of the same thing.

"Oct. 24th. At eight o'clock to-day Laura came to me and said, 'Doctor wants you to teach me about motives; what are motives?'

"After giving the meaning of the word, I referred her to a story that I read to her last evening. It was of a benevolent, kind-hearted little boy, who expended his money in purchasing little comforts for those who needed them, making it his happiness to do good to the poor and unfortunate. She was very much interested in talking of the character of the boy, and of his sister and mother. 'It was a good motive for George to give nice things to poor people.' 'Doctor had a good motive to give us this nice large room to be so warm and comfortable; he is very benevolent. But Jesus Christ was the most benevolent; we cannot be benevolent as

he was.' 'I cannot be benevolent and do kind things to crazy people, and blind and deaf people, and cure them.' 'God is very benevolent, he does so many things to make people happy.' I then tried to show her how she might be truly benevolent in little things, every day. 'I give away many things,' said she. I convinced her that it was not always a proof of *benevolence*, to give things away. During the whole lesson she was very serious and thoughtful, pressing my fingers closely, so that no letter should escape her.

"*Friday, Oct. 25th.* Laura seemed to me very rude and boisterous, and not easily restrained as usual. It was very discouraging to me, and I gave myself up to sad thoughts. Laura soon perceived it, and asked why. I told her she did not try, so much as I wished, to grow still and gentle, though we had talked so much about it. She sat still some time, and then said, 'I love Mrs. Smith best, she is so gentle.' This was evidently said to trouble me, and did not relieve me any. This is one of the very few instances when there seemed to be unkindness in the child's heart.

"But she soon repented. After dinner she was up stairs, and was gone for some time; when at last she came down and found me, she said she had a nice present for me to make me more happy, and that she would try more to improve. She said this very sadly. I took her present and exerted myself to appear as cheerful as usual.

"The present she brought was a pincushion, one of her choicest treasures.

"Lessons as usual. Talking with Laura about being kind and benevolent. She began to give me a long account of little kind things that she had done. After a time, I told her that sometimes people did kind things that their friends might praise them and think they were very kind and benevolent.

"We talked of it some time, Laura's face growing more and more red, yet half smiling. I could see she was applying the remark to herself, as indeed she does every thing that she hears of this kind. 'Why do I like to be praised?' she soon asked. I told her that every one did, and that it was right for us to like to have our friends love us, and praise us too, if we were good. Supposed the case of two little children, one of whom was very kind to his sisters that his mother might call him good, and the other did the same because he was glad to see all happy, &c. Asked her which she thought was the best child. She hesitated a moment, and replied, 'The boy who wanted to see other children happy.'"

There may be better ways of correcting such faults in children, but there are, certainly, many worse ones in frequent use. Punishment of the common kind, even that of rebuke, might have driven Laura into a habit of deceit which would



lead to duplicity, and which could hardly be cured except by herself after her conscience had become active and strong. But it will be seen that this very habit prevents the growth of conscience, and too often dwarfs it for ever.

This is a subject which cannot be considered too much or too carefully, for the neglect of it lies at the bottom of much of the evil in society.

The will and the conscience are twin-born ; and the exercise of the will should be made to promote the growth and strength of the conscience, as the exercise of the muscles promotes the growth and strength of the bones which support them.

If we forbid children to exercise their own free will, if we command them to heed our will alone, then we should also supply them with our conscience and make that the companion of our will. But this is evidently impossible ; consequently, we often punish children because they do not follow our way ; and we neglect the training of their conscience, and then punish them because it does not guide them aright.

Parents have a right to expect obedience of their children in all important matters ; moreover, it is their duty to require it ; but they have no right to forget or neglect their own duty to them. Nature gives to children feebleness of will to fit them for this obedience which we fail not to require ; and she gives them feebleness of conscience, that our conscience may be for a while their guide, and keep them from undue temptation, but this latter duty we often neglect.

Truth is plainer and more agreeable to children than falsehood, and right than wrong. They have a conscience, too, which tells them which to prefer ; but it is feeble, because nature did not intend they should rely solely upon it at first, any more than, when giving them a will, she intended that they should be independent of us.

They have also many faculties and desires, and if these are abused in any way, they may become passions which the feeble conscience cannot resist. Most children are as pure as Eve was ; but the tempting apples are left hanging so thickly around them, that it would be a marvel if they did not eat.



Children incline to tell the truth, and will tell it unless some stronger desire, as fear (that is, temptation), induce them to lie. The general error is in supposing they have no conscience ; whereas it has perhaps been neglected, or we have allowed it to suffer a strain greater than it would bear.

Numerous as are the apparent exceptions to this, they do not affect the correctness of the principle. The laws of descent influence the moral tendencies as well as the bodily forms of children ; a man may entail his dwarfed conscience, as he may his diminutive nose, upon his descendants. Thousands of parents "have eaten sour grapes," and millions of children "have their teeth set on edge." But take the descendants of truly moral ancestors, in a moral society, and if they are "*trained* up in the way they should go, they will not depart from it."

I do not believe that Laura Bridgman is so happily organized as many other children ; I think she has some constitutional disturbing forces which do not affect others. Nevertheless, I am confident that for many years she has never varied from the truth, nor swerved from the right, unless under the influence of what were, to her, strong temptations. That such temptations were not kept from her is my fault, or the fault of those circumstances which keep us all so far from perfection.

We must not bind upon her, or upon other children, greater burdens than they can bear ; but if we will act upon the principle, that the mind can be trained to perceive moral relations as quickly as it does material relations, we shall enable her and them to walk uprightly through life. I will illustrate my meaning by a reference to the process of training the mind to the study of arithmetic.

There are certain immutable relations of numbers, and by long and close attention to these the mind sees, as it were by intuition, what before was incomprehensible. A child at first does not understand the relation between *two* and *three*, or that, when united, they make *five* ; but by dissecting the *five*, — by counting upon his fingers, — by taking *five* objects and putting *three* in one heap and *two* in another and then uniting them, or

in other ways, the relation is *demonstrated* to the child, and his mind ever after assents to it as a matter of course. But it is by no means a matter of course at first ; and the mental faculty by which the relations of number are perceived requires greater or less training according to its natural capacity.

It is certain that 333 multiplied by 555 make 184,815 ; and one whose natural faculty for perceiving the relations of numbers is extraordinarily active, or one that has been long and carefully trained, will see it as quickly as we perceive that *three* and *two* make *five*. Not so, however, with a common and untrained mind ; such a one would have to *dissect* the numbers as the child dissects *five*, and arrive at the result by two or more lines of proof, before there would be a certainty of the correctness of the result.

Now the *moral* relations of things are not less certain and immutable than their numerical relations. We think we see the right and wrong on certain questions intuitively and without training ; but we have to go through very much the same exercise of the faculty by which we see it, as we did before we perceived the relation between *two* and *five*. On other subjects, where the disturbing force of interest, prejudice, or passion interferes, we cannot see the true moral relations of questions at once, any more than we can at first see the result of 333 multiplied by 555 ; but by careful training of the conscience with the intellect we can at last attain to it.

A merchant will tell by a glance at the balance-sheet what is his share of the year's profit of his house ; a process for which a schoolboy would require his slate and pencil. But perhaps there have been transactions of doubtful morality during the year's business, which the well trained conscience of a schoolboy would solve at a glance, but which the merchant could hardly decide even with the aid of a *moral slate and pencil*.

By observing such principles as these, and by being mindful always that Laura has a conscience, which, like the consciences of most children, if not yet fully developed, may be so trained as to be firmly relied upon, her teachers and friends

may reasonably expect, that, when grown to maturity, she will show great firmness of character.

Let it not be supposed that the foregoing instances of unamiable conduct are given as specimens of Laura's general conduct ; so far from it, they are very uncommon exceptions to her usual kind and conscientious deportment. I give them for two reasons ; because I would faithfully describe what so many are interested to see in all its lights, and because the lesson may be useful to others.

It is a curious case, this of Laura's. A poor blind and deaf girl, of humble history and humbler hopes, — unconscious of being the object of special regard, and yet every act and word carefully noted down, and more eagerly looked for by thousands in various parts of the world than those of purple-born princesses ! And yet it may not be a solitary case. It may be that each one of us is watched over with tender interest by guardian spirits ; — that “ all our faults are observed, conned and scanned by rote and set in a note-book,” not, perhaps, “ to be cast in our teeth,” but to serve the great purposes of truth and good.

Could Laura be suddenly restored to her senses, and clothed with our faculties and intellect, which so far transcend hers, she would stand amazed to find herself the centre of so much observation ; she would look fearfully and anxiously back to recall all her past thoughts and deeds, and perhaps painfully repent that some of them had not been better. So it may be with us, when the clog of the flesh shall be removed from those faculties and powers that so far transcend those of the body. We may find that what we whispered in secret was heard through the universe, — what we did in the darkness was seen as at noonday. But it is better for her and for us that it should be as it is ; that we should shun the wrong, not because others may punish us, and do the right, not because others may reward us, but because the one is good and the other is bad.

Laura has often amused herself during the past year by little exercises in composition. The following story, written during the absence of her teacher, will serve as a specimen of her

use of language. The last sentence, though not grammatical, may be considered as the moral, and a very good moral, of the whole.

“THE GOODNATURED GIRL —

“Lucy was merely nine years old. She had excellent parents. She always did with alacrity what her mother requested her to do. She told Lucy when it was time for her to go to school; so Lucy ran and put on her bonnet and shawl and then she went back to her mama. She offered Lucy a basket containing some pie and cake for luncheon. And Lucy went precisely at schooltime and when she got to the house she took her own seat and began to study diligently with all the children. And she always conformed to her teachers wishes — In recess she took luncheon out of her basket but she gave some of it to her mates — Lucy had some books with pictures and slate in her desk —

“When she went home she found that dinner was all ready — Afterwards her mother took her to take tea with her friends. Lucy was much delighted to play with her little cousins Lucy and Helen; and they let her see their play things. After tea Lucy was sorry to depart; and when she went to bed she thought that she had made it pleasantly to all her friends with little joyful heart.”

Laura keeps a sort of diary, in which she writes with her own hand an account of what passes every day. It is generally a bald narration of the facts; but an extract will give an idea of her daily routine of study. The diary is generally very legibly written. I will transcribe a day's record, exactly as she wrote it, with her spelling and punctuation, putting any explanations that may be necessary in brackets. The only alteration is in the use of capitals, which she has never been taught to make.

“SIXTH OF JAN TUESDAY.

“I studied arithmetic before my breakfast. Afterwards Miss Wight was occupied for Dr. till quarter to ten. Then she read to me about Bible. Abraham went to live in the city Gerar. He and his wife lived in the western corner of Palestine place [country]. But his son Isaac was very kind to comfort his parents when they grew old [.] Isaac was always good to take care of them and made them feel very happy. Abraham thanked God for his kindness exceedingly.

“Wight taught me two more lessons geography and history. Putnam was a farmer who was ploughing his land with the cattle in a field.

When tidings were brought to him of a battle at Lexington he did not stop to unharness the cattle but ran very rapidly to his home and went to live in Boston. In a few weeks thirty thousand of soldiers arrived to Boston. Most of them had no cannons nor leads nor guns. And the British went to Bunker Hill from Boston to attack the Americans and expel them away when they were going to fire upon them. And when the British saw them ready they were surprised."

Her store of knowledge has been very much increased during the last year. It will be seen, too, that she has improved in the use of language ; and when it is considered that other deaf mutes have as great advantage over her as we have over them, if not greater, her style will bear comparison with theirs.

She has become somewhat more thoughtful and sedate than formerly, though she is generally very cheerful, and sometimes displays a childish humor that shows her age is to be measured by the degree of her mental development, rather than by the number of years that she has lived.

She has extended the circle of her acquaintance, and has endeared herself to many persons who have learned to converse with her. It is the earnest hope of all that her life may be prolonged, and that we may be enabled to do our duty to her and to ourselves by making it as happy and as useful as possible.

S. G. HOWE.



## APPENDIX C.

### *Special Report of the Director upon the Subject of Printing.*

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#### TO THE TRUSTEES.

GENTLEMEN :

THE time has arrived when strong and efficient measures should be taken in this country to provide a library in raised letters, to supply the want which has been created by teaching so many of the blind to read.

A short history of the art of printing for the blind, and a notice of the books which have been published, will show this. The method of printing with raised letters was invented in 1784, by the Abbé Haüy, and his first specimens were published in Paris soon after. To him alone belongs the whole credit of the invention. The thing made quite a sensation in France, and many fine sentiments were expressed in regard to it, in prose and verse. But this was about all ; for the blind really received very little advantage from it. The art has remained in the same rude state, in that country, in which the Abbé left it. The method of printing has not been improved ; indeed, but very few books for the blind have ever been printed on the continent.

By taking the New Testament as a standard for the quantity of matter, we shall be able to understand how much, or how little, rather, has been done there. A book of the size of the New Testament, printed in the French mode, would fill nine large folios, and cost about one hundred dollars.\* All

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\* At the rate at which the books were sold at the Institution in Paris in 1832.

the *matter* that has been printed in France would fill a little more than one volume of the size of the New Testament. All that has been printed in the other continental countries would hardly amount to so much.

The art of printing for the blind was next made the object of attention in Scotland, about the year 1828, by Mr. Gall, who deserves great credit for his zeal and perseverance. He published a few books, equal, perhaps, to one half of the New Testament ; these, though less bulky than the French, were still very clumsy and expensive.\* The form of the letter is in many respects excellent ; it is angular, and the angles are easily felt ; but the fault is too great uniformity in shape.

The subject was next taken up at this Institution, in 1834 ; and, without wishing to disparage the merits of others, it is due to historical truth to say that the only real and substantial improvements upon Haüy's method were first made here, and our books first showed, by extensive use, that they could be compressed into a comparatively compact and cheap form. The improvement was simply to cut off all the *flourishes* about the letters, and to reduce them to the *minimum size* and the minimum elevation that could be *distinguished* by the generality of the blind. The reduction was so great, that the New Testament, which by the old mode would have filled nine volumes and cost one hundred dollars, could be printed, and was printed (for the first time in any language), in two volumes, and cost, in sheets, about two dollars. That form of character has never been changed here ; all our books have been printed in it, and the quantity of matter in all of them is equal to six volumes of the size of the New Testament. It is certain that no substantial improvement has since been made upon this method. All that has been done in Scotland and England is merely to effect about the same reduction of bulk and expense which we had demonstrated to be feasible years before it was done elsewhere. It is equally certain that no material diminution can be made in the *size* of the type, except by adopting

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\* The Gospel by St. John was sold by Mr. Gall for one pound sterling.

a purely arbitrary character, and abandoning the common alphabet ; because the letters are now as small as the generality of the blind can ever distinguish.

The Institution in Philadelphia took up the subject about the same time that ours did ; but, unfortunately, the first attempts were upon the old and enormously bulky and expensive method. Only one book of any size was printed, and that contained only one of the four Gospels. Subsequently, a more compact type was adopted, the letters being of the Roman form. In this character, matter has been printed equal in extent to two volumes of the size of the Old Testament, and some of it very valuable. It is to be regretted that that press has now stopped, because it was making most important contributions to the library of the blind.

Some time after it had ceased to be a matter of surprise in this country that the blind could read, public attention was loudly called to the subject in England and Scotland by several persons who supposed they had made an extraordinary discovery, because certain modifications of the Abbé Haüy's letters which they had adopted could be read by the blind. We say public attention was then first called to it, because Mr. Gall seems to have thought more about the blind than about the public.

Mr. Lucas, of Bristol, brought out a phonographic character ; Mr. Freer, a stenographic character ; and Dr. Fry, of London, adopted the common Roman character. It would be ludicrous, if it were not painful, to witness the contest for the honor of *inventing* these different methods, and for the introduction of the books printed according to each of them ; because it was, in reality, only tearing Haüy's invention into so many different pieces, and holding up the fragments as a proof that the possession of one of them conferred the title of originality and merit upon the possessor.

Parties were formed, and societies were organized, for the purpose of introducing the method which different persons supposed *must* be the best, because they saw and knew the blind could read by it, and did not know they could read by any method which presented a fair, tangible letter, and because they generally knew little about the merits of the other methods.

The two systems which used arbitrary characters, differing in form from our common letter, whatever merit they possessed, labored under the great disadvantage of not being legible by the eye of common observers. Indeed, this remarkable feature was prominent in all the discussions, namely, that many people did not judge of the different kinds of print, as they should have done, by the sense of feeling, but by the sense of sight ; that is, they required that it should be one suited to themselves, instead of one suited to the blind.

It would be tedious to go into a discussion of the comparative merits of these different ways of applying Haüy's invention, especially as they did not differ very much. The two systems which adopted the arbitrary character, unlike the common letter, seem not to have found so much favor as the third method ; or, if they did, they were not put into so extensive operation. The whole *matter* printed in those characters does not probably exceed the bulk of one volume equal to the New Testament.

Dr. Fry dying, the offspring of his brain was adopted by Mr. Allston, of Glasgow, who, having none of his own, gave to it his name ; and it is now generally known as Mr. Allston's Alphabet. He pushed the subject with great zeal, vigor, and perseverance ; and the blind in England are indebted to him for valuable additions to their library. It is true, indeed, that by far the greatest work which he undertook, the printing of the Bible, was not strictly necessary, because an edition could have been procured from this country at less cost. The whole of the New Testament, and part of the Old, had been printed here, and copies sent to England, and read by many blind persons, long before he commenced his.\* Since that time, the whole Bible has been finished here, as well as in Scotland.

I would not willingly detract from Mr. Allston's merit, but I cannot help regretting that he had not expended the large sum necessary for printing the Bible upon some other work, by the exchange of which for the American edition he would have increased the library of the blind of both countries.

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\* Copies of our books were sent to Mr. Allston in 1835 ; he commenced printing his edition in 1837.

The blind in the American schools read both kinds of print with facility, and it is not to be supposed that the blind in Britain have less cleverness than they.

The whole amount of printed matter which Mr. Allston has contributed to the library of the blind (for he deserves the credit of having done it all) amounts to about one half of a volume of the size of the New Testament.

Thus it will be seen that the whole of the printed literature for the blind in all languages is equal to only about eleven volumes containing as much matter as the New Testament. Of this a quantity equal to about one volume is in French; about one half of one volume in Lucas and Freer's type together; about one half of one in Fry's (Allston's) type; two volumes and a half in the Philadelphia print;\* and six volumes in what, for want of a better name, is called the Boston letter.†

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\* The Philadelphia books are in a type which varies little from Dr. Fry's; but they are so much superior in point of beauty and legibility to any European books, that they deserve to be classed apart.

† This form of letter, which is as great a modification and improvement of Haüy's character as any for which originality has been claimed, was contrived by myself, and extensively used before the others on the same principle were adopted. It is now used in all the Institutions in this country, and by many persons in Great Britain; but I do not consider that I have the right to claim a part of Haüy's credit for the invention, any more than to appropriate to my use a part of his estate.

Mr. Chapin, the able Superintendent of the Ohio Institution for the Blind, has recently published a valuable pamphlet, in which he gives the result of his personal examination of the British schools for the blind. On the subject of printing he makes the following remarks.

"In the United States, Dr. Howe, the Director of the Massachusetts Asylum, adopted the lower case Roman letter, modified into angular shapes, yet preserving the original form so far as to be easily read by all. The entire Bible, and various other books, are printed in this character.

. . . . .

"Of the comparative merits of the two kinds of letter destined to be the medium of the great body of the literature of the blind, namely, the Roman capitals and the Boston characters, a few words may be said.

"The latter present a much greater variety of size and shape than the



In other words, more than one half of the whole printed matter for the blind which is now in existence has been printed at our press. This may seem strange to those who judge of the subject by reading the Reports of various schools which contain lists of the works they have issued. These lists are very imposing, for the smallest quantity of reading matter that can be put between two covers is called a book ; as, for instance, the catechism, which looks as large on the list as a large book. There are nearly as many *titles* of books in the Glasgow list as in ours, and yet some single works of ours contain more reading matter than all the Glasgow books put together, excepting the Bible.

The present state of the art of printing for the blind is this : experiments have been fully tried in this country and in Europe, and have shown the perfect feasibility of printing books for the blind which are to them a source of great benefit and happiness.

The only obstacle to the increase and extension of this source of comfort and joy is its expense ; and this, as it seems to me, would be overcome at once, if the attention of the public and the sympathies of the wealthy could be enlisted in the cause.

In our age and country, the ability to read is regarded almost as a test of respectability ; and the privilege of reading is valued above all price.

Government and benevolent individuals consider education

former. This is an important consideration to the blind, who distinguish by the touch alone. The Roman B, R, and D, for example, are sufficiently unlike for sight, but are difficult to distinguish by the finger. Not so with the Boston letters, which are entirely unlike, as b, r, d, nearly. And so of many others.

“ But, independent of reasons so obvious, experience has satisfied us that beginners acquire a knowledge of the Boston character sooner than the Roman.

“ While, therefore, we admit the greater beauty of the Roman capital letter than all others, and admire the able and persevering zeal of Mr. Allston, of Glasgow, in accomplishing so much for the library of the blind, we cannot but hope, that, in this country at least, should any future presses be established, they will conform to the Boston letter.”

as the great lever by which society is to be raised up progressively, and reading is essential to education ; therefore they strive to have all children taught to read.

Now there is a large class in every generation, who, by the providence of God, and without any fault of their own, lack that sense by which others read. They are blind ; they are comparatively helpless ; they need, far more than other children, the aid and comfort which education can give ; they are, generally, very poor, and they are entirely dependent upon others. Without special assistance and instruction, they are doomed to live in mental as well as in physical darkness.

Benevolent men have invented a method by which these unfortunates can be taught to read ; many of them have eagerly read all that has been printed ; and now they, and others, who have only heard the fame thereof, — thousands of descendants of that blind Bartimeus who sat by the way-side and called upon Jesus for aid, — are stretching out their hands to us, the disciples of that same Jesus, and crying, “ Have mercy upon us ! ” And shall they cry in vain ?

We cannot restore them to sight ; but God has given what is to us a greater blessing than would be the power of working miracles, — the means of working out by human agency the relief of human suffering. The call of so many of our unfortunate brethren for light and knowledge, — for the means of cheering their lonely hours, — for books by which their minds may be strengthened and their hearts comforted, — this call we can answer by the formation of a

#### NATIONAL LIBRARY FOR THE BLIND.

The only obstacle to it is the expense ; and this should not stand in the way of a people whose garner are filled to overflowing.

All that has hitherto been done has been done by individual charity ; that has been enough to demonstrate, beyond all possibility of doubt, the utility of the work. It is a work which belongs not to one State, but to the whole country ; and it seems to me that it should be undertaken by the gen-

eral government, and a library created sufficient for all the blind in the United States. This once done, additions would doubtless be made to it by benevolent individuals, who would print editions of books at their own expense, as they might be needed.

I would propose, therefore, something of this kind ; — that each of the seven Institutions for the Blind in the United States should send a deputation of their pupils to Washington, for the purpose of giving an exhibition before the members of Congress, and enlisting their feelings ; and that a petition should then be presented, asking for a grant of money, or land that would yield at least \$ 100,000. This should be appropriated to printing one hundred works, and five hundred copies of each work ; fifty copies of each to be deposited with each of the seven institutions, for the use of their pupils, and the rest left for future distribution. There are now seventeen States which make provision for the education of their blind ; and this plan would supply them all with elementary books, and a few standard works on science.

The objection to this plan will be, that it is unconstitutional. It does not become me to argue this point ; but I would simply make two remarks. First, Congress can and does appropriate one sixteenth of each township for the purposes of education ; and here is a class requiring education more than any other, and yet unable to obtain it in the common schools. Second, there are two precedents for this measure : Congress granted a large tract of land to the American Asylum for the Deaf Mutes, and another to the Kentucky Asylum. We should ask for all the blind of all the United States only as much as has been given to one of those institutions.

But grant that we could not overcome this obstacle ; still, there is a fund which has been expressly given in trust to the government for the purpose of diffusing **LIGHT AND KNOWLEDGE AMONG MEN** ; a fund which is unemployed, and the disposition of which seems to give great trouble ; we mean the **SMITHSONIAN FUND**.

It is evident that the donor did not mean to point out any

class who should receive the benefits of his gift, or who should be excluded from them ; it was a generous, catholic provision for the education of MEN. Congress, therefore, has the right to give to blind men a share of its benefits.

It is equally evident that no appropriation can be made of this fund, by which the people of all sections of the country can be directly and equally benefited ; its advantages must be local and reaped by a few.

One sixth part of this fund would effectually supply the present literary wants of the blind of all the United States ; it would accomplish an entire and perfect work of beneficence ; it would be setting a noble example to other nations, and erecting a monument of glory more true and lasting than any that could be formed of stone or brass.

#### A NATIONAL LIBRARY FOR THE BLIND

would not only enlighten the understandings and gladden the hearts of those who should use it, but it would serve other high purposes ; it would prove that what is so proudly said in many States, that every child may be taught without price, is not an idle boast ; that this great republic, in the full career of her prosperity, listened to the cry of her humblest children, and did not repudiate her debts to humanity.

It would be a noble example of NATIONAL CHARITY, that might be followed by older and richer states, and thus turn into the neglected fields of beneficence some of those vast expenditures which are now lavished upon idle pomp or destructive armaments ; and which might, in the end, make the sons and daughters of misfortune sing aloud for joy.

At any rate, it seems the obvious duty of those who have the immediate charge of the interests of the blind, to make the trial, and to bring the subject before the government. Failure in such a cause would be better than success in some others. I shall, therefore, with your approval, endeavour to unite all the Institutions in the country to coöperate in this plan, and make the appeal to Congress as soon as possible.

S. G. HOWE.

# APPENDIX D.

## GENERAL ABSTRACT OF THE TREASURER'S REPORT.

Dr. *Perkins Institution and Massachusetts Asylum for the Blind, in Account with T. B. WALES, JR., Treasurer. Cr.*

| <i>Amount of various Bills paid by order of the Auditors, during the year 1845.</i> |              | <i>Ordinary Receipts for the Year 1845.</i>                                                                 |             |              |  |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------|--------------|--|
| To Steward's Department, . . .                                                      | \$ 7,473 96  | By Balance on hand January 1, . . .                                                                         | \$ 633 39   | \$ 487 26    |  |
| " Salaries of Officers and Teachers, . .                                            | 4,938 42     | " Amount from pay Pupils, . . .                                                                             | 1,536 80    |              |  |
| " Repairs, Carpenter and Mason-work, .                                              | 2,535 33     | " " Interest and Rent, . . .                                                                                |             | 2,170 19     |  |
| " School Apparatus and Musical Instruments, . . .                                   | 369 36       | " " State of Maine, . . .                                                                                   | 2,160 00    |              |  |
| " Insurance and Taxes, . . .                                                        | 201 02       | " " " Vermont, . . .                                                                                        | 1,120 00    |              |  |
| " Printing Reports, and Advertising, . .                                            | 247 35       | " " " South Carolina, . . .                                                                                 | 120 00      |              |  |
| " Clothing, Leaders, Post-office, &c., . .                                          | 189 32       | " " " New Hampshire, . . .                                                                                  | 950 00      |              |  |
| " Truckage and Omnibus, . . .                                                       | 51 22        | " " " Massachusetts, . . .                                                                                  | 6,000 00    |              |  |
| " Expenses of Exhibitions, . . .                                                    | 171 94       | " " Secretary of the Treasury of Massachusetts, unexpended balance of Appropriation for the Deaf Mutes, . . |             | 10,350 00    |  |
| " Bank Stock purchased, . . .                                                       | 4,990 37     |                                                                                                             |             | 1,777 55     |  |
|                                                                                     | \$ 21,168 29 | <i>Extraordinary Receipts.</i>                                                                              |             |              |  |
| <i>Extraordinary Expenses.</i>                                                      |              | " Amount for Books sold and Printing, . .                                                                   | 522 25      |              |  |
| " Printing Department, Binding, &c., . .                                            | 2,095 84     | " " Donations, . . .                                                                                        | 295 00      |              |  |
| " Balance on hand, . . .                                                            | 458 45       | " " " to Printing Department, . . .                                                                         |             |              |  |
|                                                                                     |              | " Amount from Legacy of J. Parker, Esq., . .                                                                | 1,431 33    |              |  |
|                                                                                     |              | " " " " T. S. Winslow, Esq., . . .                                                                          | 5,000 00    |              |  |
|                                                                                     |              | " Amount of Loan of Union Bank, . . .                                                                       | 189 00      |              |  |
|                                                                                     |              |                                                                                                             | 1,500 00    |              |  |
|                                                                                     |              |                                                                                                             |             | 8,937 58     |  |
|                                                                                     |              |                                                                                                             |             | \$ 23,722 58 |  |
| <i>Memorandum of Property owned by the Institution.</i>                             |              | By Balance on hand January 1, 1845, . .                                                                     |             | \$ 458 45    |  |
| Long Loan, 6 per cent. United States, . .                                           | \$ 15,000 00 | <i>Liabilities.</i>                                                                                         |             |              |  |
| 9 Shares New England Bank, . . .                                                    | 900 00       | Debt to Union Bank, . . .                                                                                   | \$ 1,500 00 |              |  |
| 83 " State Bank, . . .                                                              | 4,980 00     |                                                                                                             |             |              |  |
| Deed of Land in South Boston, . . .                                                 | 765 64       |                                                                                                             |             |              |  |
| 20 Shares Concord Railroad, . . .                                                   | 1,000 00     |                                                                                                             |             |              |  |
| Deed of one half House in Summer Street, . .                                        | 3,000 00     |                                                                                                             |             |              |  |
|                                                                                     | \$ 25,645 64 |                                                                                                             |             |              |  |



OFFICERS  
OF THE  
CORPORATION,  
FOR 1846.

---

PRESIDENT,  
PETER C. BROOKS.

VICE-PRESIDENT,  
THOMAS H. PERKINS.

TREASURER,  
PETER R. DALTON.

SECRETARY,  
SAMUEL G. HOWE.

---

TRUSTEES,

|                    |   |                                              |
|--------------------|---|----------------------------------------------|
| EDWARD BROOKS,     | } | <i>In behalf<br/>of the<br/>Corporation.</i> |
| THOMAS G. CARY,    |   |                                              |
| JOHN D. FISHER,    |   |                                              |
| CHARLES SUMNER,    |   |                                              |
| OZIAS GOODWIN,     |   |                                              |
| JOHN HOMANS,       |   |                                              |
| SAMUEL MAY,        | } | <i>In behalf<br/>of the State.</i>           |
| JAMES K. MILLS,    |   |                                              |
| SAMUEL P. LOUD,    |   |                                              |
| HORACE MANN,       |   |                                              |
| ROBERT RANTOUL,    | } |                                              |
| STEPHEN FAIRBANKS, |   |                                              |

#### ERRATA.

Page 20, 1st line, for twenty read *fifty*.

“ 52, for Peter R. Dalton, Treasurer, read *Thomas B. Wales, jr. Treasurer.*



## TERMS OF ADMISSION.

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YOUNG blind persons, of good moral character, will be admitted to the School at the rate of \$ 160 *per annum*. This covers all expenses of board, washing, books, musical instruments, &c. The pupils must clothe themselves, and pay their own fares to and from the Institution.

Indigent blind persons belonging to Massachusetts must apply to the Governor for a warrant.\*

Indigent blind persons in Maine, New Hampshire, Vermont, Connecticut, and South Carolina, should apply to the Commissioners for the Blind, care of the Secretary of State in the respective States, and can obtain warrants of admission.

For further particulars, address S. G. HOWE, — Director of the Institution for the Blind, — Boston, Massachusetts.

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### \* FORM OF APPLICATION.

TO HIS EXCELLENCY THE GOVERNOR :

SIR : — The undersigned has a son (or daughter, or nephew, or niece, as the case may be) who cannot be instructed in common schools, for want of sight.

The undersigned is not able to pay the tuition at the Perkins Institution and Massachusetts Asylum for the Blind, and petitions that your Excellency will grant a warrant of free admission.

And your petitioner will ever pray, &c.

\_\_\_\_\_.  
[Signature of the parent.]

# LIST OF BOOKS

PRINTED AT THE

PERKINS INSTITUTION AND MASSACHU-  
SETTS ASYLUM FOR THE BLIND:

WITH PRICES.

---

|                                              | No. of<br>volumes. | Price per<br>volume. |
|----------------------------------------------|--------------------|----------------------|
| BIBLE, . . . . .                             | 6                  |                      |
| Lardner's Universal History, . . . . .       | 3                  | \$ 3 00              |
| Howe's Geography, . . . . .                  | 1                  | 2 00                 |
| " General Atlas, . . . . .                   | 1                  | 3 00                 |
| " Atlas of the United States, . . . . .      | 1                  | 2 00                 |
| " " of the Islands, . . . . .                | 1                  | 1 50                 |
| First Part English Reader, . . . . .         | 1                  | 2 00                 |
| Second " " " . . . . .                       | 1                  | 2 00                 |
| Dairyman's Daughter, . . . . .               | 1                  | 1 00                 |
| The Harvey Boys, . . . . .                   | 1                  | 1 00                 |
| The Spelling Book, . . . . .                 | 1                  | 1 00                 |
| The Pilgrim's Progress, . . . . .            | 1                  | 2 50                 |
| Baxter's Call, . . . . .                     | 1                  | 1 50                 |
| English Grammar, . . . . .                   | 1                  | 1 00                 |
| Howe's Blind Child's First Book, . . . . .   | 1                  | 0 75                 |
| " " " Second Book, . . . . .                 | 1                  | 0 75                 |
| Sixpenny Glass of Wine, . . . . .            | 1                  | 0 50                 |
| Life of Melancthon, . . . . .                | 1                  | 1 00                 |
| Book of Sacred Hymns, . . . . .              | 1                  | 1 00                 |
| Howe's Blind Child's Manual, . . . . .       | 1                  | 0 75                 |
| Constitution of the United States, . . . . . | 1                  | 0 75                 |
| Book of Diagrams, . . . . .                  | 1                  | 0 75                 |
| Viri Romæ, . . . . .                         | 1                  | 1 50                 |
| Pierce's Geometry, with Diagrams, . . . . .  | 1                  | 1 75                 |
| Political Class Book, . . . . .              | 1                  | 1 75                 |
| First Table of Logarithms, . . . . .         | 1                  | 1 00                 |
| Second " " . . . . .                         | 1                  | 1 75                 |



|                                          | No. of<br>volumes. | Price per<br>volume. |
|------------------------------------------|--------------------|----------------------|
| Principles of Arithmetic, . . . .        | 1                  | \$ 1 00              |
| Astronomical Dictionary, . . . .         | 1                  | 1 50                 |
| Philosophy of Natural History, . . . .   | 1                  | 2 75                 |
| Rudiments of Natural Philosophy, . . . . | 1                  | 2 00                 |
| Cyclopædia, . . . .                      | 2                  | 3 00                 |
| The Book of Common Prayer, . . . .       | 1                  |                      |
| Guide to Devotion, . . . .               | 1                  |                      |
| Total, . . . .                           | <hr/> 41           | volumes.             |







FIFTEENTH

ANNUAL REPORT

OF

THE TRUSTEES

OF THE

PERKINS INSTITUTION

AND

MASSACHUSETTS

ASYLUM FOR THE BLIND,

TO THE

CORPORATION.

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CAMBRIDGE:

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1847.





FIFTEENTH

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T. B. WALES, JR.

SECRETARY,  
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TRUSTEES,

|                    |                                                |
|--------------------|------------------------------------------------|
| STEPHEN FAIRBANKS, | } <i>In behalf<br/>of the State.</i>           |
| SAMUEL P. LOUD,    |                                                |
| HORACE MANN,       |                                                |
| ROBERT RANTOUL,    |                                                |
| THOMAS G. CARY,    | } <i>In behalf<br/>of the<br/>Corporation.</i> |
| J. J. DIXWELL,     |                                                |
| JOHN D. FISHER,    |                                                |
| JOHN HOMANS,       |                                                |
| SAMUEL MAY,        |                                                |
| JAMES K. MILLS,    |                                                |
| GEORGE R. RUSSELL, |                                                |
| CHARLES SUMNER,    |                                                |

# REPORT.

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Perkins Institution and Massachusetts Asylum for the Blind.

*Boston, Jan. 1, 1847.*

TO THE MEMBERS OF THE CORPORATION.

GENTLEMEN, — We respectfully lay before you the following Report of the history and condition of the Institution during the past year.

The number of blind persons, inmates of the house, reported in January, 1846, was ninety-one; during the year, twenty-eight new ones were admitted, and eighteen were discharged, so that the present number is one hundred and one. This is the largest number ever connected with the Institution at any one time; but since there has been a steady increase every year, as the establishment has become more widely known, and since there must be nearly two hundred blind persons of proper age for instruction in New England, there is reason to suppose that the increase will continue in future years. There is about the same number of blind persons in every community as there is of deaf mutes; and as the Institution at Hartford has sometimes had about one hundred and fifty pupils, it is probable there may soon be as many blind here,

since the two establishments receive pupils from the same population.

There has been very little sickness of any kind during the year, and no case of mortal disease. The pupils are kept upon a simple, regular, and wholesome diet; they are required to bathe daily in the sea in all moderate weather, and in the house in cold weather, and to exercise in the open air; and most of them have the reward of good health. But, like every other school for the blind, ours presents a greater proportion of scrofulous and feeble constitutions than is found among an equal number of seeing persons, and consequently there are more frequent ailments among its members.

There is usually a striking contrast between schools for the blind and those for deaf mutes, — a difference which is to be accounted for mainly by the different effects of the privation of sight, and of that of hearing, upon the general health.

The deaf mute has nothing to prevent him from indulging the desire, so strong in childhood and youth, for continual exercise of the body and limbs; indeed, the privation of hearing, by cutting off some of those sources of mental stimulus which are of a sedentary nature, urges him to move about in search of others. To him the sofa is an abomination, and sitting still five minutes makes him feel “the rack of a too easy chair.” Movement is his great delight; some of his muscles are in action during every waking moment; indeed, he is never completely at rest; for even while he converses, his body is in action, and his eager gesticulations promote the healthy flow of his blood.

Not so with the blind man. Movement is to him



difficult, and sometimes dangerous; he goes about slowly and cautiously, except in the most familiar places; his pleasures come through the ear, and hearing is best enjoyed while the body is at rest. To him the temptation of the lolling-chair is irresistible; and if some friend will read to him, in a musical voice, the works of genius, he will sit and while the day away, nor envy a monarch upon his throne.

It is true, that, during the period of childhood and early youth, nature furnishes such a stock of animal spirits as urges even the blind boy to physical action; but his desire for movement and exercise is more generally repressed than encouraged by those who have the charge of him; and as he cannot run freely about, he seeks to work off the stimulus by motion of his body or limbs without changing his place. Hence it is so common to see blind persons who have contracted habits of reeling backward and forward, or from side to side, twitching the head, or jerking some part of the body;—habits which sometimes become inveterate, and which make the subjects of them appear very awkward and uncouth to seeing persons.

In respect to personal appearance, the contrast with deaf mutes is again very striking. The mutes not only have their frame well developed, and their carriage natural and unconstrained, but their motions are graceful, and their whole mien is pleasing. Compared with the blind, they are handsome; and this is not merely because they have the speaking eye and the animated countenance, but also because they have that ease and grace, both in their posture and in their motion, which are to be attained only by constant exercise.

The deaf mutes value these advantages of person very highly, and with good reason; for they go some way towards compensating them for their decided inferiority to the blind in the facilities for developing what are most valuable in man, the intellectual powers, the moral sentiments, and the social nature.

It should be the duty of all educators of the blind to urge them in every possible way to exercise frequently and freely, not merely the muscles of the legs in walking, but those of the whole body by gymnastics of various kinds. It is, however, a duty that is seldom fully discharged, because it is one in which the efforts of the instructor are rarely seconded by the inclination of the pupil. Many of them come to school after the period of spontaneous activity is passed, when indolence has become pleasant, and their uncouth habits are fixed; and it is as hard to cure or to improve them as it is to straighten crooked branches.

If a person should compare the cadets at a good military academy with the boys who have just entered a school for the blind, he would almost conclude that they were two distinct races of beings, — so strongly would the florid complexions, the erect figures, the expanded chests, the muscular limbs, the vigorous motions, and the firm tramp of the young soldiers contrast with the pale faces, stooping forms, puny limbs, feeble motions, and hesitating tread of the blind. Nevertheless, such is the effect of vigorous training in the one case, and of long neglect in the other; and there is no doubt, that, by care and pains enough, a company of grenadiers might be raised among the blind, that, when well dressed and padded,

might pass a tolerable muster on parade. Such is the power of physical education and training.

But it is not in the personal appearance alone, that the consequences of inactivity are seen in the blind. We have no doubt that it equally affects their health and longevity.

It is commonly supposed that there are many more persons born blind in consequence of an hereditary constitution, which is weak and scrofulous, than are born deaf; but as no satisfactory reason has been given for this, and as the fact, that blind persons are generally more feeble, and suffer more frequently from scrofulous affections, can be easily accounted for by the habits above alluded to, it may be doubted whether the supposition is correct.

We do not know whether any accurate or extensive researches have been made to ascertain the peculiarities of physical temperament in the parents and progenitors of deaf mutes, but enough has been ascertained about the parents of the blind children in our Institution, to show that the scrofulous temperament abounds among them. This is particularly the case where the blindness is hereditary, that is, where it appears in successive generations, or where there are several blind children born of one mother.

Now, if two children inherit the same scrofulous tendency, and one is born blind, while the other is born deaf, the blind child will be very likely to have the tendency develop itself in the form of pulmonary consumption, or some other disease, in consequence of the inactive and sedentary life that he leads, while the deaf one, by active life in the open air, may prevent its development and live to old age.

From a comparison between the statistics of several Institutions in this country \* for the last ten years, it appears that the mortality among the blind is greater than that of the mutes; and yet there is no doubt, that, if the inquiry should be continued ten years longer, it would appear still more striking, because the blind will be passing through a period of life in which the scrofulous tendency is more apt to develop itself in the form of phthisis than during any later period.

Accurate statistical researches may perhaps be of more use to the blind than volumes of reasonings and exhortations; they will show that there are inexorable laws of nature in operation, which tend to cut off a much larger proportion of them than of seeing persons at an early age; and that they can escape their effects only by abandoning all unhealthy and weakening habits, by observing the strictest temperance in food and drinks, and by heartily seconding the efforts of their judicious friends who would have them exercise freely and frequently in the open air.

It has been often observed in European publications respecting the blind, that they were never subject to insanity; but this is an error which originated probably with some theorist who neglected observation, and has been handed down by those who state things without naming their authority; but however it may have arisen, it is an error, as facts within our knowledge show.

While upon the subject of statistics of the blind, it should be observed, that the United States census, which ought to be a most fertile source of information,

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\* See Appendix, C.

is of very little value, because it does not give their ages.

In the case of the deaf mutes, it is of comparatively little importance to give the ages, because most of them are deaf from birth ; while a very large proportion of the blind, who are reported in the census, lost their sight through old age ; and yet the census gives the ages of the mutes, and omits those of the blind. By adding a single column to the table, very valuable information would be imparted, which would enable those interested in the education of the blind to find out all the subjects of proper age, and to provide for their wants. It is true, that the addition of only a single column to the census increases considerably the labor and expense of taking it ; but the information would be of higher importance than much that is now gathered, because it relates immediately to a large class of unfortunate men ; and the labor and money of a government can never be more fitly expended than in bringing the light of science to the aid of humanity. We hope that each institution for the blind in the country will use what influence it may possess to procure the insertion of an additional column which will supply the needed information.

The course of instruction which may be found detailed in former Reports has been steadily pursued during the past year, and, we believe, with success. The teachers have been faithful and diligent, and the pupils docile and industrious. The end which is aimed at is to give to the blind the same sort of instruction as other children receive in the best common schools, and this end we think is attained.

It may sometimes happen that wealthy parents will



wish to procure for their blind son the advantages of a higher education ; or there may be a child of indigent parents, who manifests a strong desire for literary attainments, and possesses great natural abilities. Such cases are provided for. Some of our former pupils have received sufficient instruction in the classics to be able to enter college, and to graduate, and others may yet do so ; but for the great majority such a course of instruction is not desirable ; their time can be more profitably applied to the study of the common branches of instruction, and to preparation for that kind of mechanical labor which must in almost every case be their business and their means of support in after life.

It has been said, that there is no science and no branch of human knowledge which the blind cannot master, except such as require a perception of light and shade (as painting) ; and many blind men have verified the saying by their wonderful attainments. But it is nevertheless as true, that they must devote a much greater amount of labor than other men, in order to make equal progress ; and that when all is done, they cannot make their knowledge so profitable to themselves, — profitable, that is, in a pecuniary point of view.

It has been erroneously thought, and the early Reports of this Institution may have contributed to the error, that many blind persons could be found who would make good teachers, even of seeing persons, in various branches of study. This belief, which, if not the offspring of hope, was nurtured by it, has not as yet been ripened into certainty by experience. To say nothing of his inability to avail himself of many

mechanical aids, now deemed necessary for instruction, such as the black-board, diagrams, engravings, experiments, &c., the blind man labors under the great disadvantage of being obliged to depend upon another person's eyes in all his studies and references to books. All these disadvantages may be, and have been, overcome by some blind men of uncommon ability ; but it is for common, and not uncommon, cases that we are to provide.

It would be a curious subject of inquiry for the metaphysician, whether, if a man born blind possessed great natural abilities and eminent literary attainments, he would not still encounter a difficulty, arising from the very nature of language, which no effort could overcome, and which would prevent his ever attaining the perfect use of it.

To a person born deaf, and who is consequently dumb, language invented by common men can hardly be said to be vernacular ; it will always be to him as a foreign tongue, which he may use with great skill, but never with perfect correctness. A person born blind learns a common language, as common men learn it, by the ear, and it is his vernacular tongue ; nevertheless, it must contain many words and forms of expression which he cannot fully understand, because he has never experienced the sensations which they are intended to express. The body of every language is made up of words significative of sensations which arise in the mind in consequence of the action of the external senses. Now, as sight is the most important of the senses, it will be found that a multitude of words in every tongue are directly, or indirectly, significative of impressions made upon the sensorium

through its agency. The blind learn these words and figures of speech, and attach to them some kind of meaning, but not precisely such as other men do, certainly not such as those do who have the rare power of associating clear and definite ideas with every word, and the habit of using them with propriety and precision, — such men as compose the very small class of good speakers and writers.

A deaf mute might be brought to read and understand a work on the laws of acoustics, as Saunderson, the blind mathematician, was able to understand, and even to teach, the principles and laws of optics; but the first would be as completely lost in a simple treatise on melody and rhythm as the second would be in Sir Joshua Reynolds's lectures on painting.

Acoustics and optics both treat of laws which may be called mechanical, and they may both be illustrated by comparison with impressions made upon the mind by the sense of touch; but not so with the subjects of harmony and color; they are intangible, and inappreciable by other senses than those of sight and hearing. No kind of writing tests more severely the writer's power over language than that of poetry. Had Milton been born blind, he probably could never have left such ravishing pictures of visible objects. There has been a great deal of rhymed prose written and published by deaf mutes and by persons born blind; but there is hardly to be found an original stanza of tolerable poetry among the productions of the first class, and not one of a high order of merit in those of the second. Blacklock of Scotland has usually been considered as the most gifted writer among the blind, and he was spoken of by Burke and other eminent

men of his day as a prodigy ; but his writings will be searched in vain for poetry of very high order. He says of himself, what is doubtless true of all persons similarly situated, that he always associated some moral quality with visible objects.

Doubtless, if a person born blind were endowed with that rare combination of faculties which constitutes the highest poetical temperament, he would make some of those beautiful revelations which genius gives, from time to time, as the result of its intuitive perception of the harmonies of nature, but he would nevertheless be always trammelled in his expressions by the difficulties above alluded to.

The poems of Blacklock would furnish an interesting subject of speculation to the metaphysician who studies the nature of language and its agency in developing the human faculties, but such speculations would be out of place here, and we return to say that in all ordinary cases our course of instruction is confined to the common branches of an English education. In addition to these, however, the pupils are all taught the elements of vocal and instrumental music ; and those who have much musical talent have an opportunity of cultivating it, and of practising upon the organ or other instruments, under the direction of an able and accomplished teacher. The instruction in music, and the provision of musical instruments, are a source of considerable expense, and it may at first thought seem that we are paying for a mere luxury ; but when the whole advantages of it are considered, it will be approved by every humane individual.

The blind, "from the cheerful ways of men cut off," deprived of that exhaustless source of pleasure

which the sense of sight affords, but feeling still as strong desire as others for that kind of stimulus which exercise of the senses furnishes to the mind by putting it in communication with external nature, devote themselves with double zeal to the cultivation of the sense of hearing. The result of this exercise is, like that of all other exercise, an immense increase of power, so that sounds and relations of sounds to us imperceptible are apparent to the blind, and some of them may almost be said to have an additional sense, so much more powerful is their instrument of hearing than ours. Or it may be better compared, perhaps, to the advantage which optical instruments give to us ; exercise increases the blind man's power of hearing, so that distant objects are brought as near his ear as they are brought by the telescope to our eye ; and it increases its nicety so much, that he hears minute variations of sound, as we by the microscope see the minute variety in forms. But as in the exercise of the sense of sight the pleasure is derived, not merely from perceiving the qualities of size, and color, and distance, but also from the endless variety of relations existing among them, and the beautiful harmony that pervades the whole, so in the exercise of hearing, the pleasure comes not merely from perceiving the volume, the density, and the direction of surrounding objects, but also from the ever-changing, never-ending series of impressions which the motion among them makes upon the ear.

Now that part of the æsthetic nature, which gives us a knowledge and love of the beautiful in external nature, can be cultivated only by the exercise of the senses ; but of no one of them in particular. The man who has merely the external organ of sight goes about,



and all things are to him in motion or at rest, near or remote, large or small, black or white, green or blue, but nothing more; but the man with a cultivated eye walks abroad in nature, and sees grace in every motion, from the treading of an animal upon the ground, to the floating of a cloud upon the air; he sees beauty in the symmetry of every resting or growing thing, from the rounded pebble, to the spreading oak, — harmony in every combination of colors, from their wild diversity in the evening sky, to their perfect blending in the lily's leaf; to him the world is a succession of pictures of wondrous beauty, and in every one he sees marks of the beneficence as well as the skill of the great Limner; — such a man is not likely to be an irreligious man.

The blind man, who has merely an ear for hearing sounds, goes about, and all things are to him noisy or still, close at hand or farther off, sonorous or dull, and nothing more; but the blind man with a trained ear and a cultivated mind finds an exhaustless source of pleasure in tracing out the thread of harmony which runs through all natural sounds; to him there is music not only in the human voice, but in the language of animals, in the breath of the wind, in the patter of the rain, in the rush of the brook, in the play of the leaves; in every thing, from the hum of the insect, to the peal of the thunder, he perceives harmony, — he feels that the voice of nature is filling the temple of the world with a perpetual hymn of praise to its great Author; — such a man is not likely to be an irreligious man.

Believing that the tendency of proper cultivation of the musical sense is not only to sharpen the discrimi-

nating power of the ear, and to make it a better substitute for the eye, but also to elevate the sentiments and to refine the moral nature, we do not ask whether a pupil can do any thing toward earning his livelihood by playing on an instrument, but we try to give him a knowledge at least of the rudiments of music, in the assurance that it will aid in developing an important part of his nature, and making him a better as well as a happier man.

The work department has been in a thriving condition. A particular statement of the shop account, with the Auditor's certificate and the vouchers, is herewith submitted.\*

We may remark here generally, that the amount of sales during the year was \$10,765.83, being more than any preceding year.

The cost of carrying on the department, over and above its income, has been \$300. By its means, however, we have been enabled to pay the sum of \$2,043.11 to the blind men and women, — not in alms, but in wages, which they have earned by steady and industrious labor. Besides this, there has been paid the sum of \$300 to former pupils of the Institution, who are now engaged in the domestic part of the establishment; making the sum of \$2,343.11, which thirty-one blind persons have earned. The persons so employed are adults, and most of them are destitute of any means of support but their own labor; and without some such facilities as are given them by the Institution, they would probably be living in a state of idleness and painful dependence upon others. Now they work industriously and cheerfully;

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\* See Appendix, D.

they rejoice in the bread which they eat, because it is sweetened by the toil that earned it; they are proud of the simple garments which they wear, because by the labor of their own hands have they comfortably clad their bodies; they value the little surplus of money in their pockets, because it was not placed there by the hand of charity; and they fear nothing but a discontinuance of the work which makes them independent.

We regret that they are not able to earn enough to warrant us in giving them higher wages, so that they may be able to pay for their board themselves, and thus live in different families in the neighbourhood. It is impossible to give them the advantages and the pleasures of social and domestic life, while living as they now do. In an establishment like ours, the workmen must live separate from the young pupils, and for the most part associate only with each other. Now all history and experience show that adults cannot live and congregate together exclusively, for a long time, without great disadvantage to their moral and social nature, — without stunting, on one side, the development of natural and healthful feelings, and promoting, on the other, the growth of prejudice and selfishness. These evils are felt as yet with us only in a slight degree, because the number of adults is still small, and the necessity of their strict separation from the main family is not urgent; but when, instead of twenty, there shall be, as there will be, from fifty to one hundred, who will require to be supplied with work, then a more strict separation from the young family will be expedient, — then an *esprit de corps* will be formed, and a moral deterioration must

follow. It is time, therefore, that some measures should be taken to provide the means by which those blind persons who have been taught in our school, and who cannot quite earn their own livelihood, may receive a little indirect aid, to counteract in some measure the disadvantage under which they labor through want of sight, and may be supplied with work. In order to illustrate our meaning, we will mention two cases.

A. is a man who was many years an inmate of our establishment; he is not stone blind; he has light enough to guide himself about; he is a very industrious man, and familiar with all the trades that we carry on. He is married, has children, and keeps house in the immediate neighbourhood of our school. He comes every morning very early to our shop, where he is supplied with stock and tools, and goes to work weaving mats. These are sold on his account; the cost of the stock is deducted from the proceeds of sales, and the net profits are then paid over to him. Thus, by a little indirect aid from our establishment, and by strict industry and economy, this man is enabled to go home every night to his family, bearing in his bosom the feeling of honest independence, and in his pocket the means of giving them support and comfort.

B. is an inmate of an almshouse in a neighbouring town; an old man, stone blind, and nearly deaf; he is an honest, temperate, pious man, who bears his burden with a courage and cheerfulness that are lessons to those who fret under the lesser ills of life. While he was sitting in involuntary idleness, and waiting for death, there came along a blind boy who had been taught in our school to braid mats. The old man grasped at this chance of doing something useful, and

learned enough from the boy to commence a rude mat himself. He sent here for some stock and set himself to work, and though from his years and his long inactivity he labored under very great disadvantages, still he worked on stoutly and hopefully, and now he is able to make a salable mat. Once or twice in a year he is led to our store, where he disposes of his work, takes new materials, receives the little balance of his profits in money, and goes away again to his lone home in the almshouse with a glad and a grateful heart.

The first man, by the possession of light enough to guide himself in the day time, is spared the expense of a leader, and by his early training has acquired dexterity at his work; and he can, by strict industry and economy, enjoy the greatest of human luxuries, the relation of husband and father, and, blessing others, be himself blessed. Not so the second; he was suddenly struck blind, as any of us may be, in mid life, and in full strength, and became as helpless as a little child, and, being poor, he was led away to the almshouse, and left in darkness, dependence, and despair. But religion came to his aid, and hope revived as the prospects of another life opened to his mental gaze; and now come the means of employment, and a trifling gain, and the rest of his journey will be comparatively easy and pleasant. These are real and not imaginary cases.

Now what we earnestly desire is the establishment of a fund, by means of which blind persons who are in the condition of the second may be placed in the condition of the first of those we have mentioned.

There should be a large workshop, that would cost perhaps \$5,000; and a fund, the income of which



would pay for warming it and keeping it in order. The only other expenses would be the salary of a seeing master-workman, and the rent of a salesroom in the city. These expenses defrayed, the profits on the work would be sufficient to pay all the others, and to allow the workmen wages enough to enable them to board in families in the neighbourhood, or, what would in many cases be infinitely better, to support families of their own. The whole of these expenses would not exceed \$ 1,000, and would soon be diminished. Such an establishment would not necessarily be connected with this Institution.

If a plan such as is here sketched were carried into execution, it would constitute an Institution supplementary to, but independent of, ours ; one that would be exceedingly simple and practical in its operation, and that would be useful through all time ; for there always will be a considerable proportion of those who leave this school, who, though they can nearly support themselves, cannot quite do so, and for the want of a little aid must come upon the parish ; a step which is always humiliating, and often demoralizing. Such an establishment, too, would relieve this Institution from an embarrassing charge, and enable it to confine its efforts strictly to its proper sphere, that of teaching and training the young blind. We earnestly recommend this plan to the consideration of those charitable persons who may desire to secure the continuous application of their means to works of beneficence long after they have ceased to be their own almoners.

During the first part of the past year our press was in active operation ; the second and third volumes of the Cyclopædia were finished, and now constitute very val-

uable additions to the library for the blind. We regret to say, however, that the work is suspended for the present, on account of want of funds. The American Bible Society has printed a second edition of the Bible from the plates made here. There is some prospect also, that the work of printing will be taken up in the New York Institution for the Blind, and still carried on. This is the more desirable, since the Glasgow press, the only one in Great Britain which made any considerable contributions to the library for the blind, was stopped some time ago, and there is reason to fear, that, in consequence of the lamented death of Mr. Allston, its most active and able friend, it will not for a long time be put in operation again. In reality, nothing is doing for the library of the blind, in the English language, at this moment, anywhere; for all the efforts at London and Bristol are now directed to printing the Bible, a work long ago completed here.

For an account of the state of the finances we would refer you to the Report of the Treasurer, which, with the proper vouchers, has been examined and approved by a committee of your Board, and is herewith submitted.\*

We submit also the inventories of the real and personal estate, as required by law.

We cannot close this Report without expressing to the Corporation our sense of the services of those of our body who have signified their desire not to be reëlected, Mr. Goodwin and Mr. Brooks. The first of these gentlemen has acted as Trustee for nine years, and has shown much interest in the affairs of the In-

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\* See Appendix, B.

stitution, and been a most agreeable as well as able associate ; but Mr. Edward Brooks may be considered as one of the fathers of the Institution. He was one of the three or four who associated themselves together for the purpose of getting up a school for the blind, when as yet no such thing had been even talked of in this country. He gave the most efficient aid in its formation, and from that day to this has been one of its warmest and most useful friends. In his former capacity of Auditor of Accounts, and at all times as a wise counsellor, he has rendered valuable services, without any other compensation than the increase of that self-approval of which he must enjoy so much from works of beneficence in other fields.

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At a meeting of the Board of Trustees, held January 9th, 1847, the foregoing was adopted as the Annual Report of the Board, and ordered to be presented to the Corporation.

Attest,

S. G. HOWE, *Secretary*.

At the Annual Meeting of the Corporation, held January 12th, 1847, the Report of the Trustees was presented and read ; whereupon it was

*Resolved*, That the Report of the Trustees be accepted, and printed for the use of the Corporation.

PETER C. BROOKS, *Pres.*

S. G. HOWE, *Sec'y*.

## APPENDIX.

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*Report of the Director to the Trustees upon the Case of Laura Bridgman and other Pupils who receive special Instruction.*

BOSTON, *January 1, 1847.*

GENTLEMEN :

It was stated in the Report about Laura Bridgman which was made in January last, that her health had been failing during several months, and was then very feeble ; I am sorry to say that it continued to grow weaker for some time, and has not yet become entirely reëstablished.

During the most of the past year she has been weak and sickly. In the spring especially, she became very much emaciated, her appetite failed almost entirely, and she could hardly be persuaded to take nourishment enough to keep her alive.

She was placid and uncomplaining, and though never gay as in former years, she was never gloomy. She appeared to feel no fear or anxiety concerning her health, and when questioned closely about it she would answer that she was very well. Indeed, the change had come over her so slowly and gradually, that she

seemed to be hardly conscious of it, and showed surprise when it was alluded to. Sometimes, indeed, when she found that she was wearied by walking half a mile, she was forced to remember her former long walks of five or six miles, and to think about the change.

As she grew thinner, and paler, and weaker, she appeared to be laying aside the garments of the flesh, and her spirit shone out brighter through its transparent veil. Her countenance became more spiritualized, and its pensive expression told truly, that, though there was no gloom, neither was there any gladness, in her heart.

Her intellect was clear and active, and she would fain have indulged in conversation and study about subjects of a serious nature ; but she was sensitive and excitable, and the mental activity and craving were perhaps morbid. Be that as it may, however, she was at a fearful crisis in her life, and it seemed to be our first duty to save that. She was therefore not only diverted from all exciting trains of thought, but dissuaded from pursuing her usual course of study. We were very desirous not to alarm her by showing the anxiety which was really felt about her ; and this object was gained so effectually, that she probably did not discover her danger. She is always very observant, however ; and ascertains the state of mind of those about her by reading parts of the natural language of the emotions, which we never observe, but which are as sure guides to her as the expression of the countenance is to us. It is almost impossible that her companions should feel particularly gay or sad, and withhold the knowledge of it from Laura. The natural



language of the feelings is almost infinite. A common observer reads only the page of the countenance; the keener one finds meaning in the tones of the voice, or, looking more closely, reads signs in the very shaking of hands; but Laura not only observes the *tones of the finger language*, she finds meaning in every posture of the body, and in every movement of a limb; in the various play of the muscles she observes the gentle pressure of affection, the winning force of persuasion, the firm motion of command, the quick jerk of impatience, the sudden spasm of temper, and many other variations which she interprets swiftly and correctly.

With all these means of ascertaining the state of her teacher's feelings, and with the certainty that an untrue answer would never be given to her, Laura would surely have learned that her life was thought to be in some danger, if she had ever been accustomed to dwell upon thoughts of sickness and death; but she had not, and therefore she walked without a shudder upon the brink of the grave.

The result was as I had hoped and expected that it would be, for I was more sanguine than others. The natural strength of her constitution, which had triumphed in that fearful struggle during her infancy, though at the expense of two of the most important organs of sense, had been carefully nurtured by constant exercise, simple diet, and regular habits of mind and body, and it carried her safely through this second trial. After she had been brought so low that it seemed as if the tendency to disease could find no more resistance to overcome, it yielded at last, and then the vital powers began to rally slowly.

When the weather grew warmer, she began a course of sea-bathing, and of exercise upon horseback. These occupied and amused her mind, and strengthened her body; and she continued to grow better through the year, — very slowly, indeed, but surely. She has now recovered some portion of her lost flesh; and her appetite is so far restored, that she eats a sufficient quantity of bread and milk, but does not like any thing else. She does not wish to change her food at all, but, when meal-time arrives, she sits down cheerfully to her simple bread and milk, morning, noon, and evening; and having finished that, she disregards all the dainties and the fruits with which the capricious appetite of invalids is usually tempted. Her present diet is one of her own choice, and though it is not the best, and its sameness is unwise, we do not insist upon a change while she is manifestly thriving, because it might do more harm than to indulge a caprice of appetite, not uncommon with delicate persons.

But the best sign of returning health is the change which has taken place in her animal spirits; nor is this change uninteresting in a moral point of view. Before her illness, she was not only a happy but a merry child, who tripped cheerfully along her dark and silent path of life, bearing sportfully a burden of infirmity that would have crushed a stout man, and regarding her existence as a boon given in love, and to be expended in joy; since her illness, she seems to be a thoughtful girl, from whom the spontaneous joy of childhood has departed, and who is cheerful or sad in sympathy with the feelings of those about her.

I hope and believe that her health will be perfectly restored, although it is still very frail, and easily deranged by any over-exertion of body or mind. Perhaps a complete change may take place in her physical system, and her now slender form develop itself into the proportions of a large woman; — such changes are not unfrequent after such severe crises. At all events, with restoration of health will come a return to those studies and occupations which have been necessarily suspended.

She was just beginning to understand, that, as she was getting freed from the obligations of unconditional obedience to those who had directed her childhood, she must come under no less unconditional obedience to the new monitor and master, — the conscience, that was asserting its rule within her; and the veneration and affection for human friends, which are the first objects of the awakened germ of the religious feeling, were gradually tending upwards and expanding into worship and love of God.

This transformation of her soul — this disenthralment of its high and independent powers — was becoming perfectly clear to her by means of instruction, and would have changed what had been mere habit and blind obedience into conscious duty and stern principle, but the process was necessarily interrupted. Such instruction would of course require the consideration of subjects which were to her of the most intensely exciting interest, and might have cost her life.

I know that many will say that I had already committed a great error by deferring the consideration of these subjects so long, and that I should have tried to retrieve it by giving at once the knowledge which they

suppose necessary to eternal salvation, even at the expense of mortal life. To this I have only to answer, that I have gratefully received and carefully weighed all the counsel which has been given to me in the spirit of kindness, but that it has failed to alter my views of my duty.

As to those reverend gentlemen whose talents, and acquirements, and profession free them from fallibility so great as mine, and who have denounced me as "a blind leader of the blind," and bestowed upon me other terms of reproach, which I can more willingly bear than return to them, I have only to say that I think they overlook some of the circumstances of the case. If one of those gentlemen should receive into his household a child who came from a great distance, and whose intellectual and spiritual education had been intrusted to his care, he would doubtless pursue such a course of religious instruction as he conscientiously believed to be for that child's best good; he would not stop to ask what other people think and believe, but would teach the doctrines that he believed himself.

I did not venture, however, to do even so much as this, without first consulting the parents of Laura Bridgman, who are pious and intelligent people of the Orthodox faith. When her education was so far advanced that she could understand some of the doctrines of that religion in the spirit of which we had striven to make her live, I wrote to them to know their wishes. If they held that any particular form of faith and doctrine was necessary to her salvation, they had only to signify it to me. I gave them a general idea of the course which I should follow, if

they left it to my discretion, and this course was not one which the gentlemen above alluded to would have approved ; nevertheless, the parents did not choose to prescribe any other. They paid me the compliment of leaving me to be the teacher of their child in what I am sure they consider, as I do, to be the most important part of her education.

I should not make these statements and explanations in a Report which will go before the public, if they had no bearing except upon the case of Laura Bridgman, because that is a peculiar one, and for the religious doctrines that I may impart to her I am responsible only to her parents and to God ; but they have a bearing upon the general interests of the Institution. They afford an opportunity for noticing insinuations which have been thrown out, that sectarian influence is used in our school. Such insinuations are unjust and injurious. They have been made probably by those who infer from some expressions in my Reports upon Laura Bridgman, that my religious sentiments are what they are pleased to denounce as false and dangerous. The error arises from misunderstanding the nature of those documents ; they are special Reports, made by me, and for which I alone am responsible. They do not pretend to give the views of the Trustees or officers of the Institution ; nor do they afford any indication of its policy with regard to the religious instruction of the pupils generally.

That policy has always been perfectly liberal, and, as it seems to me, very just and proper.

We have Catholics and Protestants, and members of every sect of Protestants, among our pupils, and we carefully abstain from using any influence that



may affect the mere doctrinal belief of any of them. Our religious exercises consist simply of reading the Bible without note or comment, singing, and repeating the Lord's Prayer. The Bible is one of our school-books, and is always placed within the reach of every pupil. The only other books of a religious character that have been printed in raised letters are the Pilgrim's Progress, and some small works selected from among the publications of the American Tract Society, the Prayer Book of the Episcopal Church, and the Guide to Devotion, by the Presbyterian Board of Philadelphia. These books may be considered of a sectarian character, but they were paid for by Orthodox societies or individuals who had a right to choose; and I was too desirous of increasing the library of the blind, and too fearless of the effect of such books on the minds of my pupils, to object to the selection. I shall be most happy to receive contributions from any persons of Orthodox faith for printing books of their selection, and I will do all in my power to cause the blind throughout the country to read them. We have printed a great many other books besides those above mentioned, and the selection of which was left to me; but although the money to pay for them had been raised by contribution among Unitarians, not one of them expressed any wish to have books printed which taught their particular sectarian views, nor have I ever selected such.

The press of our Institution exercises a considerable influence over the blind; a large part of all the matter printed in raised letters has issued from it; its books are used all over this country; none of its expenses are paid by the State, but by individuals; and yet,

notwithstanding those who pay for it and those who direct it are all of one sect, they have never in any instance used it to put forth or to uphold the views of that sect. If we were to look for similar instances of liberality, we should find many that fall short of, before we found one that came up to it; and yet that liberality is manifest in other proceedings of the Institution, — I hope in all.

We abstain from any sectarian teaching; but we require the pupils to attend public worship every Sabbath, each one in the place selected by himself or his parents. Many of them attend Sabbath school in their respective places of worship, and thus all the religious doctrinal instruction that they receive is given to them by pastors and teachers of their own faith.

But Laura Bridgman cannot hear preaching, nor learn in Sunday schools; and those religious persons who would have her taught their form of faith, because they think it is the very best form, should not blame me, if I do just as they would do in my place, and teach her the form of faith which I think is the very best form.

However, her friends, and to the credit of humanity be it said they are a multitude, need not be alarmed; the form of faith which I shall try to give her will be catholic and charitable; it will be charity and good-will to men, — love and obedience to God. I shall explain to her the Bible as I understand it; I shall try to make her believe, as I do, that it contains a revelation of God's attributes, and that it points out to us all the way to happiness through the path of duty. It is already something more to her than a cold and barren

abstraction. If she does not understand its doctrines, she begins to feel its spirit. On the last occasion of her manifesting any impatience, she said to Miss Wight, "*I felt cross, but in a minute I thought of Christ, how good and gentle he was, and my bad feelings went away.*" For some months, she has been in the habit of asking her teacher every Sunday about the sermon she heard.

The mode of teaching her has been detailed in former Reports, and as she has not entered upon any new course of study during the past year, I shall not now occupy your time with any details respecting her instruction. A general review of her character and deportment during the past year gives rise to some agreeable reflections. In former years, though she presented an extraordinary example of gentleness, truthfulness, and affection, she showed, like most children, occasional excesses of feeling, which required her conduct to be under the regulation of others; so that she was not entirely a free moral agent. During the last year, the reins of authority have been slackened; she has been allowed to follow more freely her own inclinations; and though her teacher has been, as in former years, her constant companion, and doubtless exercised great influence over her, yet her society and companionship have been rather sought by Laura than imposed upon her. Opportunity has thus been given her to develop her individuality of character, and to exercise her moral powers by self-guidance.

It would have been practicable to keep her in leading-strings still longer, and, by taking advantage of habit, to require unconditional obedience for years to

come, though this might have been difficult, for she evidently inherits a strong self-will ; but the time had arrived when she ought to begin to govern herself ; she showed considerable capacity for doing so, and it would have been wrong to keep her in subjection.

Not only was it right to give her considerable freedom of action, but to have withheld it would have been injurious to her moral growth, by the loss of that exercise in self-government which prepares one for complete independence of thought and action. The result of leaving her in comparative freedom has shown that self-government, when the proper age for it has arrived, and the previous habits have been good, is as much better than foreign government, as walking by the aid of its own bones and muscles is better for a child than going in leading-strings.

Her thoughts, as I remarked before, have been of a more serious nature, and her conduct more sober, during the past year, than in former times. This is probably the natural consequence of the lowered tone of her physical health, and not, as I have been able to discover, of any thought or fear of death.

Already with returning health and strength there appear glimpses of her former gayety of heart ; and though she may never again be the merry, thoughtless girl that she was, we may hope to see in her a happy and cheerful woman. She will no longer be the same object of public curiosity and interest that she has been, but she will not be the object of less care and affection to her friends so long as her frail life shall last.

OLIVER CASWELL, the deaf and blind mute whose case has been so often related, has been in good health during the past year, and continues to be the same gentle and amiable boy as ever.

His progress in learning language and acquiring intellectual knowledge is comparatively slow, because he has not that fineness of fibre, and that activity of temperament, which enable Laura to struggle so successfully against the immense disadvantages under which they both labor. Still he continues to make gradual improvement, and can express his thoughts pretty well upon all ordinary subjects.

His case proves, therefore, very clearly, that the success of the attempt made to instruct Laura Bridgman was not owing solely to her uncommon capacity. Oliver is a boy of rather unfavorable organization, and of sluggish temperament; he had been deaf and blind from infancy; he received no instruction until he was twelve years old, consequently he lost the most precious years for learning; nevertheless, he has been taught to express his thoughts both by the finger language and by writing; he has become acquainted with the rudiments of the common branches of education, and is an intelligent and morally responsible person. Henceforward there can be no excuse for leaving any deaf and blind mute, who has ordinary capacity, in the state of irresponsible idiocy to which persons in his situation have heretofore been condemned by high legal authorities,\* as well as by public opinion.

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\* "A man is not an idiot, if he hath any glimmering of reason, so that he can tell his parents, his age, or the like matters. But a man who is born deaf, dumb, and blind is looked upon by the law as in the same state



Oliver's memory is not tenacious. A great part of what has been taught him he forgets in a month afterwards. This is true of all the intellectual branches, especially of those in which objects are not used as illustrations; but it is not true of the mechanic arts, of the knowledge of persons and things with which he comes in contact. He is a very apt learner at any handiwork; he delights in the use of tools, and excels most of his companions in the workshop. He never forgets a lesson which has been taught him there, because it is a lesson upon *objects*.

The importance of appealing to the evidence of the senses, in teaching children, is sometimes overlooked by those who suppose that the advantage of it is confined to a knowledge of visible and material things; whereas it really extends much farther, and aids the mind in mastering abstract subjects. Strictly speaking, words are objects; a bare description of a steam-engine would be a lesson on objects; the words are substitutes for the thing; the learner tries to see with the ear; his mind, sitting within like a judge, receives the evidence through one sense that ought to have been given through another; but this is second-hand evidence, and therefore weaker; it is as if it had been translated out of one language into another, and lost much of its spirit in the process. If a model is used in the lesson, the advantages extend as far as the resemblance is perfect; but even supposing the size and appearance of the model to be the same as those of the original, still much of the language must be translated

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with an idiot; he being supposed incapable of any understanding, as wanting all those senses which furnish the human mind with ideas." — *Blackstone's Commentaries*, Vol. I. p. 304.

and weakened ; the motion, the noise, and the effect must be represented by words. If the lesson is given in the engine-room, and the parts and their connections are explained, and the huge machine is set in motion, and some experiment is tried upon a piece of wood or iron, to show the crushing and irresistible power of the stroke of the piston, the lesson is invaluable, because the mind receives most of the evidence through witnesses who speak their vernacular tongue, which it understands, and retains for ever.

Possibly the mode of giving lessons by objects may be abused, as every good thing may be abused, but it is very hard to conceive how the abuse shall be practised.

It may be said that this process of translating the language of one sense into that of another, and of forming general and abstract ideas from the evidence of all the senses, is a necessary and very important mental operation, and that, by presenting objects and the sensible qualities of objects to the different senses, we prevent the pupil from carrying on this operation, — in other words, prevent him from exercising the power of abstraction. To this it may be answered, that the tendency to abstraction and generalization, like the tendency of the body to grow, is strong and irresistible ; like that, it does not so much require encouragement as direction ; no one fears that the boy will not grow, the only fear is that he may grow crooked or deformed.

When a child hears or reads a description of a thing, he must necessarily form some idea or other about it, and it is very important that his idea should be as nearly correct as is possible. The tendency and the

danger is, that he will contract the habit of not examining closely the evidence given by the senses, and consequently that his ideas will be vague and indistinct. Inattention to those qualities of things which are the objects of sense leads to inattention to words which are the signs of these objects; and inattention to words makes the meaning of language obscure and equivocal, and obscurity of language causes evil without end both in school and in after life.

In the instruction of deaf and blind mutes, it is important to keep these principles always in view, and probably it would be so in other cases. To return to the illustration of the steam-engine; if the learner has a clear and distinct idea of the cylinder, piston, valve, cam, balance-wheel, and other parts, and of the principles of expansion, latent heat, friction, &c., so that when these words are used he knows exactly what they mean, then the engine or the model would be less indispensable. But the mischief is, that we often fail to require a knowledge of the component parts and principles, and a clear idea of the descriptive words, and we dispense with the model also. How many young persons, after studying years about geography, grammar, history, and natural philosophy, find out, for the first time, long after leaving school, what a harbour, a noun, a legislator, and a lever, really are!

In the case of Oliver Caswell, the difficulties could never be entirely overcome, even should he live to the age of Methuselah, and the little knowledge that can be given to him is with difficulty retained, unless it is illustrated by words which derive their meaning directly or indirectly from the sense of feeling or of smell. With regard to intellectual knowledge, then, he

is still a child, and his tastes and pursuits are those of a child ; but in his affections he is as tender and true as a woman ; in his deportment he is as regular and discreet as a man.

What is most remarkable about him, perhaps, is the disparity between his mental powers and attainments, and his moral sentiments and social affections. His natural ability, as I said, is small, and his acquired knowledge very limited ; but his sense of right and wrong, his obedience to moral obligations, and his attachment to friends, are very remarkable. He never wilfully and knowingly violates the rights or injures the feelings of others, and he seldom shows any signs of temper when his own seem to be invaded, but he bears even the teasing of little boys with gentleness and patience. He is very tractable, and always obeys respectfully the requests of his teacher. This shows the effect which kind and gentle treatment has had upon his character ; for when he came here, he was sometimes very wilful, and showed occasional outbursts of temper which were fearfully violent. It seems hardly possible that the gentle and affectionate youth, who loves all the household and is beloved by all in return, should be the same who a few years ago scratched and bit, like a young savage, those who attempted to control him.

During the past year, his principal study has been that of language, of which his knowledge is still very limited and his command imperfect. He is instructed, for the most part, by familiar conversation, in which the teacher contrives to give him some knowledge of arithmetic, geography, &c. He is best pleased, however, to be in the workshop, and he will probably



become a good workman, and be enabled to support himself by his own labor after he leaves school.

Another child, ten years of age, has been brought to our school during the past year, whose case is a very interesting one.

She has a strong and vigorous frame, which, however, is evidently tainted with scrofula. She became nearly blind several years ago, and at the age of seven she lost her hearing entirely. Her parents, fearing that she would become entirely blind, brought her here in October last, and committed her to our charge.

She presented a very vigorous but unfavorable organization; for though she had the indications of uncommon intellectual capacity, she had evident marks of very strong and active propensities.

She still retained the power of speech, and had vision enough to guide herself about, and to distinguish the position of the fingers. As there was danger that her eyesight might be lost entirely, it was thought best to take advantage immediately of what was left, and to teach her the manual alphabet of the deaf mutes.

But even though there had been no such danger, it would have been proper to give her the manual alphabet, because it is not unlikely that she may lose the power of articulation entirely in a few years. When persons become deaf at her age, it is often seen that they begin after a while to mispronounce certain words, because, not being able to hear the sound they make, they cannot correct their pronunciation, and it grows worse and worse, until at last they utter one word when they think they utter another, become dis-



couraged, and give up all attempts at talking. This is not always the case, but it is sometimes so.

This girl manifested a violence of temper and strength of will far beyond her years. Sometimes, when her temper was roused by any trifle which displeased her, she was the terror of the little girls in the school, striking and fighting like a little fury. Sometimes she was their torment by her rude and boisterous mirth, which nothing could repress, and which showed itself in mischievous pranks.

I had given directions that her violence should never be met by violence, and it often happened that her teachers, unable to enforce obedience, or to control her in any way, were obliged to bring her to my office. She dreaded this very much, for, although I had been careful not to treat her harshly, or even to use a threatening gesture, she had the wit to perceive that I had the power and needed only to exercise the will, in order to have her punished severely.

This case seems to confirm the opinion formed by observing other blind mutes, that the occlusion of two great avenues of sense is apt to prevent the harmonious development of the mental and moral powers, by perverting the energies of the system to the undue development of the animal nature.

It is very probable that this child had not been wisely treated at home; but as her parents are intelligent and respectable people, it is impossible to suppose that she learned by example the tricks and pranks which she displays when excited by passion. Her conduct has at times been so violent and unseemly, that it appeared to call at once for a resort to the easy, summary, and certain mode of subduing her

by some kind of corporal punishment ; but as there was danger of driving her into cunning and deceit, and as we could not tell whether her violence did not proceed from physical causes over which she had no control, I was unwilling to have it used. It begins to be evident already that she is somewhat improved, and her teachers will persevere in the use of kind and gentle persuasion, unless it should become obvious that punishment must be used, when it will be resorted to in such a way as to prevent the necessity of its repetition.

It would be wrong to refrain from using corporal punishment in such cases merely through the desire to carry out a theory, nor do we do so ; the principle in our school is, to use it only after all other means have failed ; but the other means have not failed for many years. There were cases, in the early history of the school, in which corporal punishment seemed to work like a charm, and its success apparently demonstrated the wisdom and necessity of its use ; but more mature experience and reflection have led me to doubt whether the object which it effected could not have been gained by less objectionable means. I will mention the most remarkable case that ever occurred with us.

Soon after the Institution was opened, a man about twenty-five years old was brought to us, who became quite deaf at the age of eighteen, and gradually lost the power of speech, until he was altogether dumb at twenty-four. He was nearly blind, but not entirely so. He was generally tractable and obedient, but occasionally refractory. One day, he refused to go to work upon a basket which he was learning to make.

He was encouraged and urged, but remained obstinate, and upon his teacher persevering still more, he suddenly seized an axe and struck a violent blow at him; the teacher fortunately escaped the blow, and the man put himself on the defensive. I was summoned, and as soon as the man ascertained who it was, he fled and took refuge in the coal cellar, and defended himself by throwing large lumps of coal at those who attempted to go in and seize him. He was subdued at last by severe corporal punishment, and from that day forward he never gave us the slightest trouble.

This was our first experience in such cases, and though it was successful, I have always looked back upon the cruel scene with pain. It is true, that, after the struggle was once begun, it seemed necessary to decide it by force, but I cannot help thinking the issue might have been avoided.

There is always one painful consideration about such cases, and that is, though the person may not be insane, in the common acceptation of the word, he may be under the influence of physical irritation which he himself does not understand, and which he could not explain, if he did. It is possible that the little girl of whom I have been speaking may at times be under the influence of some pent-up constitutional irritation, which occasionally vents itself in boisterous laughter and wild pranks; for at times she indulges in them without any apparent cause. Grown people sometimes urge the state of their nerves or stomach in excuse for inequalities of temper which they would unhesitatingly punish in children by blows or reproofs.

There is one conclusion to be drawn from such cases, which is very important, and that is,—the lower the grade of intellect and the more narrow the capacity of the pupil, the more of care, and skill, and kindness does he require at the hands of his teacher. When the light of reason burns brightly, it may suffice for the youth's guidance; he may be neglected, or even misdirected, with less evil; but where it just glimmers in the socket, he cannot go safely alone a single step, and neglect or ill treatment may put it out for ever.

The child last referred to has already made very rapid progress in her studies. She has been under instruction only three months, and yet she has learned to use the manual alphabet with great ease and dexterity, and converses very fluently. Having learned to talk before she lost her hearing, of course she has now only to acquire the habit of making words with her fingers instead of uttering them with her lips. She still retains the power of articulation, and her voice sounds naturally and pleasantly, and we try to keep up the use of it, though she begins to like to use her fingers in conversation, and will probably soon prefer to talk with them entirely. She is fond of study, and will undoubtedly make a good scholar.

It has been stated in former Reports, that persons are not unfrequently blind in consequence of the scrofulous nature of their whole physical organization, or of some general tendency to disease. This feebleness of organization and tendency to disease sometimes pervade the brain and nervous system, and then there is weakness of intellect and want of moral ener-

gy. I do not mean that the two are necessarily connected, but that where there is feebleness of intellect resulting from a want of healthy tone in the brain and nervous system, there is usually a corresponding weakness of the moral sentiments. Such persons yield readily to the strongest impulses; and these in childhood being the animal appetites are unwisely indulged by the parent, or secretly abused by the children, until they become too rampant and strong to be controlled by any appeals to the moral sense.

Children are sometimes brought to us whose intellectual condition and apparent want of capacity would cause them to be rejected from common schools as incompetent to be taught, who, if left to themselves, would degenerate still farther into idiots, and yet who were probably born with a fair capacity. In some, the intellectual powers have been left in such entire inaction, or have been so completely cut off from any stimulus, that they remain as weak as those of infants. In others, they have been prostrated or weakened to a fearful and serious extent by habits which are almost fatal to any hope of improvement.

In saying that we are expected to teach, and in some cases do succeed in a good measure in teaching, children who are of so low a grade of intellect that they could not be taught in common schools, even if they had all their senses, I do not mean to disparage other teachers. I mean, that we can go to the necessary expense of time, and make the proper appliances, which they could not do without neglecting other scholars.

Cases of this kind, whether of children who are



blind, or deaf, or merely weak in intellect, should be carefully attended to, if from no higher motives than those of a wise economy. I have no doubt, from personal observation of many poor creatures, who, reduced to the lowest stage of humanity, drag out a life of grovelling idiocy in the almshouses of this State, that they originally had capacity enough to become respectable and independent men, if they had been aided by proper care and training.

Among the first class which I have mentioned, that is, those who originally possessed a good physical organization and common mental capacity, but who had become dull and stupid for want of exercise of the body and stimulus to the brain, are found more girls than boys. Their parents, through ignorance or mistaken kindness, not only keep them as much as possible in-doors, and perhaps in a rocking-chair, most of the day, but encourage them to lie in bed and sleep as long as possible; they allow them to vegetate like plants, and supply them with abundant food and drink to favor their growth. Now the error, so common among adults in this community, of taking too little sleep, is not so fatal to the healthy tone of the brain as its opposite, especially when the slumber is favored and prolonged by warm covering and silence. The brain generally guards itself pretty well from overwork, and flags and nods or operates but feebly when exhausted; but it yields to the more insidious enemy, rest, and if wrapped in soft slumber all night, and indulged in dreamy listlessness all day, it will be brought with great difficulty to any vigorous and sustained action.

I have been led naturally to make these remarks in connection with the special cases for which this Report is made, and I may improve the opportunity to explain why I am obliged to employ so many teachers, and why our system of instruction is so very expensive, compared with that in common schools.

To say nothing of Laura Bridgman and Oliver Caswell, each of whom requires a large portion of the attention of one teacher, we have several other pupils who cannot be taught with the classes, and who require special instruction.

There are not over eighty scholars who attend the school, and if they were about the same age, and of about the same capacity, they might be taught by two teachers; but they are of all ages from six to twenty, and of all grades of intellect from imbecility to decided talent. The first must not be neglected, and the second must not be held back in a snail pace, to wait for the laggards. Besides the music teacher, I am obliged to employ three teachers and two assistants, and we ought to have another.

Miss Wight still has the charge of Laura Bridgman, and is to her as a mother, friend, and teacher. To her is due all the credit for the moral and intellectual improvement which Laura has made during the last year. Miss Tallant has the care of the boys' school, and Miss Paddock of the girls'. The former has been assisted by Mr. Sturtevant, and the latter by Miss Carter, both of whom were formerly pupils in the school. I take this opportunity to express my obligations and thanks to them all for the ability and zeal with which they have discharged their several duties

during the year. The success of the schools is owing to their labors.

Mr. Werner continues to have charge of the music department, which has made excellent progress under his skilful management.

Very respectfully,

S. G. HOWE.

## APPENDIX B.

Dr. *Perkins Institution and Massachusetts Asylum for the*

|                                                          |  |           |             |
|----------------------------------------------------------|--|-----------|-------------|
| For amount paid upon orders of Auditors of Accounts, for |  |           |             |
| Steward's account, — provisions, fuel, wages of          |  |           |             |
| domestics, &c., bills of 1845,                           |  | \$ 524 22 |             |
| " " 1846,                                                |  | 6,838 03  |             |
|                                                          |  |           | \$7,362 25  |
| " " orders for Salaries of Officers and Teachers,        |  |           |             |
| Oct. 1845,                                               |  | 1,283 33  |             |
| to Oct. 1, 1846,                                         |  | 3,411 62  |             |
|                                                          |  |           | 4,694 95    |
| " " " " Carpenter and Mason Work, Paint-                 |  |           |             |
| ing, and Repairs in 1845,                                |  | 378 84    |             |
| 1846,                                                    |  | 1,000 00  |             |
|                                                          |  |           | 1,378 84    |
| " " " Printing Department, bills of                      |  |           |             |
| 1845,                                                    |  | 500 00    |             |
| 1846,                                                    |  | 1,568 16  |             |
|                                                          |  |           | 2,068 16    |
| " " " Musical Instruments, &c., repairs of,              |  |           |             |
| 1845,                                                    |  | 56 96     |             |
| 1846,                                                    |  | 100 00    |             |
|                                                          |  |           | 156 96      |
| " " " Insurance,                                         |  |           | 160 00      |
| " " " Clothing for pupils,                               |  |           | 126 41      |
| " " " Rent of Office, cost of Carpet,                    |  |           | 95 25       |
| " " " Books and Apparatus,                               |  |           | 201 05      |
| " " " Printing Annual Report,                            |  |           | 192 76      |
| " " " Expenses of Expeditions and Exhibitions            |  |           |             |
| with Pupils,                                             |  |           | 372 82      |
| " " " Post Office,                                       |  | 1845,     | 20 00       |
| 1846,                                                    |  | 30 99     |             |
|                                                          |  |           | 50 99       |
| " " " Medicines,                                         |  | 1845,     | 34 60       |
| " " " Advertising,                                       |  |           | 17 01       |
| " " " Leaders, Garden expenses, and small                |  |           |             |
| items,                                                   |  |           | 215 32      |
| " " " Loan to shop for increasing the capital            |  |           |             |
| stock,                                                   |  |           | 1,000 00    |
|                                                          |  |           | \$18,127 37 |
| " " " Loan of Union Bank, 1845,                          |  | 1,500 00  |             |
| Interest,                                                |  | 40 75     |             |
|                                                          |  |           | 1,540 75    |
| " " " Interest on Loan from Merchants' Bank,             |  |           | 10 67       |
| " " " For 5 Shares in Concord Railroad, and              |  |           |             |
| Interest from May 1st,                                   |  |           | 253 75      |
| " " " Commission on Sale of House, and for               |  |           |             |
| recording Deed,                                          |  |           | 15 50       |
| " " " Cash on hand to New Account,                       |  |           | 4,098 57    |
|                                                          |  |           | \$24,046 61 |

*Blind in Account with T. B. WALES, JR., Treasurer.* Cr.

|                                                    |              |
|----------------------------------------------------|--------------|
| By Balance on hand, Jan. 1, 1846,                  | \$ 458 45    |
| " Amount received from the State of Massachusetts, | 7,605 18     |
| " " " " " Vermont,                                 | 1,776 94     |
| " " " " " Maine,                                   | 2,228 80     |
| " " " " " Connecticut,                             | 676 60       |
| " " " " Interest on Stocks,                        | 1,215 30     |
| " " " " Donations for Printing Fund,               | 942 58       |
| " " " " Tuition of paying Pupils,                  | 455 00       |
| " " " " Donations,                                 | 351 20       |
| " " " " Sale of Stocks,                            | 5,493 75     |
| " " " " " " House,                                 | 2,842 81     |
|                                                    | <hr/>        |
|                                                    | \$ 24,046 61 |

*Errors excepted.*

*Boston, Dec. 31, 1846.*

Signed,

T. B. WALES, JR., Treasurer.

*Boston, January 7th, 1847.*

The undersigned, a Committee appointed to examine the Accounts of the Treasurer of the Perkins Institution and Massachusetts Asylum for the Blind, for the year 1846, have attended to that duty, and hereby certify that they find the annexed Account to be correctly cast, and properly vouched, and the balance on hand proved to be, \$4,098.57, say Four Thousand ninety-eight  $\frac{57}{100}$  dollars.

The Treasurer also exhibited to us evidence of the following property belonging to the Institution.

|                                                        |              |
|--------------------------------------------------------|--------------|
| Long Loan, 6 per cent. United States,                  | \$ 10,000 00 |
| 9 Shares New England Bank,                             | 900 00       |
| 83 " State Bank,                                       | 4,980 00     |
| 25 " Concord Railroad,                                 | 1,250 00     |
| Deed of Land in South Boston, purchased June 20, 1844, | 765 64       |
|                                                        | <hr/>        |
|                                                        | \$ 17,895 64 |

Signed,

SAMUEL HENSHAW,  
G. R. RUSSELL.



## APPENDIX C.

*Data for ascertaining the Comparative Mortality of the Blind, and of Deaf Mutes.*

The following facts, which have been gathered from a correspondence with several Institutions, are valuable as far as they go. It is hoped that others may be induced to make still further researches.

During ten years previous to January 1st, 1847, there entered at the Institutions for the Deaf and Dumb, —

|                      |     | Average Age.         | Already Deceased. |
|----------------------|-----|----------------------|-------------------|
| At Hartford,         | 369 | 14 $\frac{1}{2}$     | 27                |
| “ New York,          | 328 | 13 $\frac{177}{328}$ | 14                |
| “ Philadelphia,      | 222 | 12 $\frac{1}{2}$     | 8                 |
| Total of Deaf Mutes, | 919 | 13 $\frac{3}{4}$     | 49                |

At the Institutions for the Blind, —

|                   |     |                    |    |
|-------------------|-----|--------------------|----|
| At Boston,        | 156 | 16                 | 8  |
| “ New York,       | 210 | 15 $\frac{4}{35}$  | 17 |
| “ Philadelphia,   | 113 | 14                 | 7  |
| “ Columbus, Ohio, | 138 | 14                 | 12 |
| Total of Blind,   | 617 | 14 $\frac{11}{12}$ | 44 |

It is difficult to ascertain what would be the average mortality among an equal number of persons in ordinary life and of the same age. The best way that has occurred to me is to ascertain the mortality among the students and graduates of our colleges during the last ten years. The result is as follows: —

|                     | Entered, 1837 - 46. | Average Age.     | Already deceased. |
|---------------------|---------------------|------------------|-------------------|
| Harvard University, | 840                 | 16 $\frac{1}{2}$ | 28                |
| Brown University,   | 540                 | 18 $\frac{1}{2}$ | 19                |
|                     | 1380                | 17 $\frac{1}{4}$ | 47                |

Thus it appears that the mortality among the blind is greater than that among seeing persons of their own age and similarly situated, in the ratio of 98 to 44; and greater than that among the mutes in the ratio of 66 to 44. The average mortality of the two classes, as compared with that of ordinary persons similarly situated, is as 84 to 47.

These data are, to be sure, few and imperfect; but as they confirm what would be the *a priori* inference, it is probable that a wider circle of observation will show the same results, and perhaps in a more striking degree.

## APPENDIX D.

---

*Abstract from Shop Books, Institution for Blind, Jan. 1, 1847.*

### *Assets.*

|                                                   |             |
|---------------------------------------------------|-------------|
| Amount of Debts due from individuals, good, . . . | \$ 1,515 96 |
| “ “ Stock on hand, . . . . .                      | 5,076 68    |
| “ “ Cash, . . . . .                               | 272 29      |
| “ “ Profit and Loss, . . . . .                    | 336 36      |
|                                                   | \$ 7,201 29 |

### *Liabilities.*

|                                                                                    |             |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------|
| Amount due to Institution (Cash Account for capital<br>originally invested), . . . | \$ 4,621 15 |
| “ “ Individuals, . . . . .                                                         | 2,580 14    |
|                                                                                    | \$ 7,201 29 |

From this it appears, that the cost of carrying on the establishment, over and above the profits of the same, is \$ 336.36. There is included in that amount the sum of \$ 86.25, caused by closing and charging over the “Suspense Account,” which contained the demands considered bad and doubtful ; still it is thought some of the demands may be obtained, which will go to reduce the above amount, or to the credit of Profit and Loss the present year.

Of the amount, \$ 2,580.14, put down in the liabilities as due to individuals, there is \$ 511.73 due to blind persons for labor.

The above account is in accordance with the books, as examined and compared with vouchers.

Signed,

STEPHEN FAIRBANKS, *Auditor.*

## TERMS OF ADMISSION.

---

YOUNG blind persons, of good moral character, will be admitted to the School by paying at the rate of \$ 160 *per annum*. This sum covers all expenses, except for clothing ; namely, board, washing, books, musical instruments, &c. The pupils must furnish their clothing, and pay their own fares to and from the Institution.

Indigent blind persons belonging to Massachusetts can be admitted gratuitously by applying to the Governor for a warrant.\*

Indigent blind persons in Maine, New Hampshire, Vermont, Connecticut, and South Carolina, by writing to the "Commissioners for the Blind," care of the Secretary of State, in the respective States, can obtain warrants for free admission.

For further particulars, address S. G. HOWE, Director of the Institution for the Blind, Boston, Mass.

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### \* FORM OF APPLICATION.

TO HIS EXCELLENCY THE GOVERNOR :—

SIR :—The undersigned has a son (or daughter, or nephew, or niece, as the case may be) who cannot be instructed in common schools, for want of sight.

The undersigned is not able to pay the tuition at the Perkins Institution and Massachusetts Asylum for the Blind, and petitions that your Excellency will grant a warrant for free admission.

And your petitioner will ever pray.

Signed, \_\_\_\_\_

This should be accompanied by a certificate signed by one or more of the Selectmen of the town, or Aldermen of the city, in this form :—

I hereby certify, that, in my opinion, Mr. \_\_\_\_\_ is not a wealthy person, and that he cannot afford to pay \$ 160 *per annum*, for the education of his child.

Signed, \_\_\_\_\_

There should also be a certificate, signed by some regular physician, in this form :—

I certify, that, in my opinion, \_\_\_\_\_ has not sufficient vision to be taught in common schools ; that he is free from epilepsy and contagious diseases.

Signed, \_\_\_\_\_

# LIST OF BOOKS

PRINTED AT THE

PERKINS INSTITUTION AND MASSACHUSETTS  
ASYLUM FOR THE BLIND:

WITH PRICES.

|                                              | No. of<br>volumes. | Price per<br>volume. |
|----------------------------------------------|--------------------|----------------------|
| BIBLE, . . . . .                             | 6                  |                      |
| Lardner's Universal History, . . . . .       | 3                  | \$ 3 00              |
| Howe's Geography, . . . . .                  | 1                  | 2 00                 |
| " General Atlas, . . . . .                   | 1                  | 3 00                 |
| " Atlas of the United States, . . . . .      | 1                  | 2 00                 |
| " " of the Islands, . . . . .                | 1                  | 1 50                 |
| English Reader, First Part, . . . . .        | 1                  | 2 00                 |
| " Second Part, . . . . .                     | 1                  | 2 00                 |
| Dairyman's Daughter, . . . . .               | 1                  | 1 00                 |
| The Harvey Boys, . . . . .                   | 1                  | 1 00                 |
| The Spelling Book, . . . . .                 | 1                  | 1 00                 |
| The Pilgrim's Progress, . . . . .            | 1                  | 2 50                 |
| Baxter's Call, . . . . .                     | 1                  | 1 50                 |
| English Grammar, . . . . .                   | 1                  | 1 00                 |
| Howe's Blind Child's First Book, . . . . .   | 1                  | 75                   |
| " " Second Book, . . . . .                   | 1                  | 75                   |
| Sixpenny Glass of Wine, . . . . .            | 1                  | 50                   |
| Life of Melancthon, . . . . .                | 1                  | 1 00                 |
| Book of Sacred Hymns, . . . . .              | 1                  | 1 00                 |
| Howe's Blind Child's Manual, . . . . .       | 1                  | 75                   |
| Constitution of the United States, . . . . . | 1                  | 75                   |
| Book of Diagrams, . . . . .                  | 1                  | 75                   |
| Viri Romæ, . . . . .                         | 1                  | 1 50                 |
| Peirce's Geometry, with Diagrams, . . . . .  | 1                  | 1 75                 |
| Political Class Book, . . . . .              | 1                  | 1 75                 |
| First Table of Logarithms, . . . . .         | 1                  | 1 00                 |
| Second " " . . . . .                         | 1                  | 1 75                 |



|                                            |           |      |
|--------------------------------------------|-----------|------|
| Principles of Arithmetic, . . . . .        | 1         | 1 00 |
| Astronomical Dictionary, . . . . .         | 1         | 1 50 |
| Philosophy of Natural History, . . . . .   | 1         | 2 75 |
| Rudiments of Natural Philosophy, . . . . . | 1         | 2 00 |
| Cyclopædia, . . . . .                      | 4         | 3 00 |
| The Book of Common Prayer, . . . . .       | 1         |      |
| Guide to Devotion, . . . . .               | 1         |      |
| Total, . . . . .                           | <u>43</u> |      |







*With respects from 'Hew*

SIXTEENTH

ANNUAL REPORT

OF

THE TRUSTEES

OF THE

PERKINS INSTITUTION

AND

MASSACHUSETTS

ASYLUM FOR THE BLIND,

TO THE

CORPORATION.

---

CAMBRIDGE:

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# R E P O R T.

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Perkins Institution and Massachusetts Asylum for the Blind.

*Boston, January 5, 1848.*

TO THE CORPORATION.

IN obedience to law and custom, we lay before you our Report of the history of the Institution during the last year, and of its present condition.

The number of blind persons reported on the first of January, 1847, was one hundred and one. During the year, sixteen have been discharged, one has died, and ten have been received, so that the present number is ninety-four.

There has been more sickness than usual. The epidemic which was so prevalent in this neighbourhood last autumn invaded our household, and carried off one boy, named Thomas Paul. He was a weak and puny child, and his system sank under the first attack of the disease.

No other persons were severely ill, but so many were indisposed, that it was thought best to break up the school before the usual time of vacation, and to send the scholars home.

The Institution has been conducted upon the same

general principles as in former years. All new-comers, who are of the proper age, are placed in the Junior Department, and commence a regular course of instruction. They rise at five o'clock, and bathe; then they go to walk, or take some other exercise, which, with devotional services in the hall, and breakfast, occupies the time until seven o'clock. At seven they go into school, which continues, with an intermission of ten minutes every hour, until one o'clock, P. M. The whole time, however, is not devoted to severe intellectual labor, but a variety is created by lessons in vocal or instrumental music. In the school they are taught to read, write, and cipher. They then study geography, history, physiology, natural and intellectual philosophy, and grammar. Of these various subjects those scholars who are of average ability obtain at least as good a knowledge as the youth in the best public schools in our Commonwealth. In some cases, instruction is given in the higher branches of study.

Part of the afternoon is devoted to manual labor. There is a shop in which the boys learn some simple handicraft, while the girls are taught to sew, to knit, and to exercise their fingers upon some fancy work. Besides this, the pupils are trained to some work about the house, which makes them more active and handy. By these means they are prevented from spending too much time in study, to which some of them are strongly inclined, or in the indulgence of that listless and profitless mood of mind to which many of them are very prone. In the evening they assemble to listen to reading, either of the newspapers or some useful book, before retiring for the night.



Such is the general division of time, which is strictly observed through the whole term, with the occasional exception of a holiday, or an expedition for recreation by land or water.

On Sunday they all attend public worship in the neighbouring churches. The pupils themselves, or their parents, choose some particular place of worship; and, as churches of the usual variety are to be found near at hand, all can be suited in their tastes and opinions. Many of them attend Sabbath school in their respective places of worship; so that, as care is taken to exclude sectarian doctrines from the course of instruction in the Institution, the opinions of the pupils respecting doctrinal matters in religion are formed upon the basis prescribed by the parents.

Such is the course which the pupils generally pursue during the time spent in the Junior Department, which is from five to seven years. After this they return to their former homes, there to find some way of employing their time usefully to others and profitably to themselves. Some few, however, remain and enter the Senior or Work Department, on hire, and are allowed the profit of their labor.

It would doubtless be desirable, on some accounts, to have more system and uniformity than there has hitherto been, with regard to the time of reception and discharge of the pupils. It would be well to have a sort of Commencement,—a fixed day upon which alone pupils should be received; also to have them all about the same age; to have none who are decidedly weak in intellect and unable to keep up with their class; and then to carry them all to-

gether through a regular course of instruction, and to discharge them at the same time.

Such a course would be advantageous to some of the pupils, and very convenient for those who have the management of the school; but, as yet, it has been impossible to enforce any such system. If circumstances would only conform to our wishes, it would be easy to lay down rules for the time of admission of pupils, and for their continuance in the Institution. A blind child should remain at home, if he can have the care of watchful and intelligent parents, who would pay great attention to his bodily health and the development of his muscular strength and activity; who would give him good moral training, and such intellectual instruction as can be imparted by conversation and by reading aloud. This would include vocal music. At the age of twelve years, he should be sent to the Institution, and remain five years in the Junior Department, spending part of each day in purely intellectual studies, in the practice of vocal and instrumental music, and in some manual labor. At the end of this time, his character, inclinations, and capacities would be so well known, that it would be easy to fix upon his future course. If his parents were rich, they could provide for him; if they were poor, the question would arise how he could best provide for himself. If he had a very decided musical taste, and a natural aptitude to teach, he should remain in the Institution two years longer, and spend his time principally in the study and practice of music, but should still have enough bodily exercise and manual labor every day for his full growth in stature and strength, and enough of study for the development of his mental powers.

A youth thus favored by nature and improved by art may safely be sent out into the world to take care of himself; for, though blind, he will be sure to find some place in society which he can fill usefully and profitably. The experience of our Institution proves this satisfactorily. There are several of our former pupils who are now earning a good livelihood by teaching or practising music.

It must be confessed, however, that the hopes once entertained of the blind being able to turn their talents and acquirements to account by teaching other branches than music have not been fulfilled. Some, indeed, do very well as teachers in kindred establishments for the blind, but these are too few to be taken into a general account. Some are useful in the families of their relatives, as teachers of the young; but here there are other considerations than that of value received. The teachers of common schools generally are so poorly paid, that the blind, laboring as they do under an insurmountable disadvantage, cannot compete with them. The calling of preacher, especially among the Baptists and Methodists, is sometimes adopted by the blind; but it does not enter into our course to give any special instruction for such a vocation. As for public lecturing, to which so many of them are inclined, experience makes it perfectly certain that blind persons are only tolerated in that by the public in consequence of their infirmity, and that the support given is only another form of charity. What a person of rare talent or genius may do is not the question.

But to return. It is unfortunately the case, that the great majority of the blind are poor; that very few of

them have either extraordinary musical talent, or aptitude for teaching, and that, as a class, they must depend upon the labor of their hands for feeding and clothing their bodies. Such youth should enter the Work Department at the end of their five years in the Junior Department, and pass two years as probationers, not yet giving up all their studies. At the end of these two years, their course of instruction should be considered as finished, and they should then be dismissed to set up for themselves; or, if they have proved to be diligent and able workmen, and have behaved in a proper manner, they should have the privilege of remaining as workmen upon wages.

A system like that above described, if it could be carried out in all cases, and the proper classification of pupils be maintained during their stay, would be advantageous, but it has as yet been unattained. It is very difficult to adhere even to a rule respecting the age of admission of pupils. Suppose the age of ten or twelve is fixed upon as the earliest at which they can be admitted; then a case will present where a child of only five or six years old is neglected or maltreated by ignorant or intemperate parents, or is left an orphan, and the plea for an exception in his favor will be irresistible; for to exclude him until he is twelve years old might be to ruin him. Or suppose the age of six or eight is fixed upon for admission, and a boy or girl becomes blind at twelve or fourteen, or, what is very common, suppose the parents neglect to send the child to the Institution until he is twelve or fourteen years old, or so old that he begins himself to demand some instruction, it would be very hard to refuse such a youth admittance, — that is, to refuse to teach him because he had not been taught before.

From these and other causes, it happens that new scholars have to be admitted at all ages, from six to sixteen; and, in the case of girls, sometimes even older. We apprehend that this must be the case, until it is perfectly well understood by all classes of the community that the blind may be taught without any expense to the parents, and that their instruction should be begun at an early age.

But there is another and perhaps a still greater obstacle to any satisfactory system of classification, and that is the very great inequality of mental power which prevails among the pupils. Those who have been made blind by accident, and a few of those who have become blind through severe disease, may be supposed to have a fair average amount of native mental ability, and the occlusion of one sense will induce them to exercise the others so diligently as to enable them to attain extraordinary power in their use. The same cause will make them exercise their mental powers, especially their reflective faculties; and if they have the common social advantages, they will generally deserve the name, which they always get, of remarkably sensible children. When they go to school, they show great fondness for study, great eagerness in intellectual pursuits, and they will make very rapid progress therein. It is not an extraordinary thing for blind children in our school to learn all their letters well in less than a week, and to read simple books in a month. In six weeks or three months they read the New Testament pretty fluently, and this they accomplish without exclusive attention to reading.

These favored children never need any coaxing or driving to their lessons; on the contrary, they need



rather to be held back, lest they should injure themselves by too much mental labor. Hence it is that in all schools for the blind there will be found a number of bright and forward children ; and if they alone are shown off to visitors (and it is natural to show off the best), the hasty and incorrect inference will be drawn, that the blind, as a class, are more clever and acute than seeing children.

But there is another, and, unfortunately, a still larger class, who have inherited blindness from their parents, or, at least, who have inherited from them such a strong tendency to diseases of the eyes, such a scrofulous temperament, or such a loose and flabby bodily organization, that they are readily made blind by slight diseases and accidents, which persons of healthy and vigorous organization would shake off with ease. In such cases the brain and nervous system are generally of the same character as the rest of the bodily organization, and the consequence is, not only a want of that spontaneous activity which causes what is usually called natural quickness and intelligence, but also a want of mental power. This class comprehends all grades, from the merely dull and indocile, down to the idiotic.

This subject will be found more fully considered in a Report of the Director, which is appended. It is alluded to here to explain the difficulties in the way of classification.

The circumstances above noticed, if traced out to their natural consequences, will show that the blind, as a class, have to bear, not only the privation of sight and the immediate evils attendant thereon, but also other more remote, but not less necessary evils ; and

that the inequality between them and other persons is greater, even, than at first appears.

This, however, instead of weakening their claim to our sympathy and interest, makes it stronger. Accordingly, in the general arrangement of the Institution, it has been thought best to forego some advantages and conveniences which would arise from having all the pupils go through with a regular course of studies in a given time. If the situation of a person be such, when he applies for admission, as to make it very much for his advantage that he be received at once, he is taken in, even if he be under or over the usual age, provided he be not too old.

So with regard to mental capacity ; there would be some advantage and convenience in having all the new-comers of at least the average amount of intellect, so that all might be taught in one class, and by one teacher. But we refuse admittance to none who bring the passport of blindness. The consequence is, that there are many pupils who are below the average of mental capacity ; some who hardly rise above imbecility ; and occasionally one who, if possessed of eyesight, would be considered and treated as our idiots are. The number of these two last-mentioned classes has increased of late years in the Institution, and they require peculiar care and special instruction. They have only one poor, small talent, but that should be nurtured and increased as carefully as the richer gifts of their more favored fellows ; for, without such care and culture from others, they pass through life almost without the consciousness of possessing the attributes of humanity.

The Senior or Work Department has been conduct-

ed upon the same principles as in former years. There have been twenty-four young men and four young women employed during the year. The amount of sales was \$11,591.22, being more by \$1,338.54 than in any former year. The amount of money paid out in wages to blind persons has been \$2,026.15, which gives an average of \$75 to each one. As they have no board to pay, this is a high rate in comparison with the wages earned by other laborers doing an equal amount of work, and, being found to be more than can fairly be afforded by the profits on the work, will be lessened.

This department was established upon a very small scale, and as an experiment. It has gone on increasing from year to year, and finding favor with those who doubted the wisdom of extending the operations of the Institution beyond its strict duty, the instruction of the blind. As time enough has been given to the experiment, and as it has become desirable that larger workshops and greater facilities for work should be provided, if the department is to be considered a permanent one, we will here give a sketch of its history, and of its present condition.

At the very commencement of the Institution, it was decided that the scholars should spend several hours every day in manual labor of some kind. Basket-work, brush-making, carpet-weaving, and the manufacture of door-mats, were all tried and carried on for several years by the pupils, who worked only three or four hours a day, and spent the rest of their time in study. At first, people bought the articles pretty readily, but it soon became clear that they did so for the novelty of the thing, and to encourage the blind. This feeling could not last long. The number of pupils in-

creased, and the manufactured articles began to accumulate, and to encumber the attics. The supply was greater than the demand, for we depended upon our visitors. It was then resolved to take a shop on Washington Street, and to place the goods in competition with others, and try to sell them at the market prices. It soon became evident that the manufactured articles did not compare well with those made by seeing people, and the reason was clear ; they were the work of apprentices, or of persons who spent most of their time at something else. Year after year passed away, and it began to be found that some of the pupils who had finished their course of study, and even become tolerably good workmen, could not earn a livelihood in the country, and that, in spite of their education, they could not keep themselves out of the almshouse. The difficulty which a blind workman has to encounter when working alone, and the advantage of combination, have been set forth in former Reports, and we need not repeat them.

Some of these persons were industrious and meritorious, and they were allowed to continue in the Institution, and to work all the time for their own benefit.

On the 1st of January, 1843, it was found necessary to make a distinction between the scholars and the workmen, and also to open a separate account with the shop. A fund was set apart for carrying on the shop, and advances were made to it from the general treasury. The last advance was made in January, 1846, and was for \$1,000 ; so that the sum charged to the shop, and vested in its stock and tools, is \$4,756.96. Against this sum there are the stock and tools, the debts due, and the balance of cash on

hand, January 1, 1848 (\$285.61); in all, \$3,235.68. This, deducted from the capital advanced, shows that the actual expense of carrying on the shop, for five years, has been \$1,521.28, or \$304.25 per annum.

The manner of conducting the Work Department is this. A number of former pupils, and a few young men who were past the age for admission into the school when they first applied, compose its members. They live in the house with the younger pupils, but they have separate apartments, and their meals by themselves. They are also exempt from some of the regulations imposed upon the Junior Department. They are required to assemble in the morning, to attend devotional exercises, and to be regular at the hours of work; but in other respects they are left to their own guidance.

The stock and tools are furnished by the Institution, and a master workman is appointed to oversee the work. A tariff of prices is established. Each one works by piece-work, and is paid in cash monthly.

The goods, when manufactured, are sent to the depot or shop on Washington Street, and exposed for sale.

The accounts of this shop are kept entirely separate from those of the house; and they are examined with vouchers by a committee appointed for that purpose.

All the expenses of the shop, the stock and raw materials purchased, the rent, the salaries, as well as the wages of the workmen, are all defrayed out of the proceeds of the sales.

But it must not be supposed, because all these expenses are paid out of the profits upon the work, that therefore the Work Department is really the source



of any profit. The board of the workmen must be taken into account ; because, if it were not for the existence of the Work Department, the Institution would not have to provide for all of them. Now, at the lowest calculation, this should be put down at \$75 per annum for each one. This, multiplied by 28, the average number of those employed in 1847, makes \$2,100. Then there should be added \$250, for the carting done for the shop by the market wagon, and \$300, the difference between the receipts and the expenses ; this will carry the whole cost to \$2,650. From this deduct the sum of \$450, received by the Treasurer from different States in New England, as an allowance for persons employed in the Work Department, and \$600 for the expenses of those whom the Institution would probably support in any case, and there will appear a balance of \$1,600, which that department has really cost the Institution during the last year.

It would seem, that, where there is no rent of workshop to pay, no commissions, and no other expenses except those immediately connected with the work, a community of blind persons ought to be able at least to support themselves ; and we trust, that, in time, ours will be able to do so. There are several things, however, to be taken into the account, in judging of the past and present condition of the department.

In the first place, the enterprise is comparatively new. Five years' experience has not convinced the public generally that they can buy articles made by the blind without paying a little more for them in the way of charity. Now many really good people are indisposed to mix up charity with business. If called upon, they are willing to give ; but when they buy, they want to buy as cheap as they can.

Experience in this case shows that harm results, in the long run, from violation of the clear principle, that, in trade, the blind must depend upon the real value of the articles they make, and not upon considerations of charity. While the novelty lasts, people are willing to pay more for a poor article made by a blind man than it is truly worth ; but they get tired of this ; and when, at last, he has learned to make a really good article, and offers it for its just value, they are shy of him.

Some of our workmen are still only apprentices ; but some are really good workmen ; and every article offered for sale is fully worth the price asked for it. Purchasers are not taxed, either directly or indirectly, for charity. When this is generally understood, the demand for work by the blind will increase.

Heretofore, the amount of business has been out of all proportion too small for the expenses necessary for carrying on the shop. It would cost but very little more for overseeing and for shop expenses, if double the amount of manufactured articles were sold.

But there is still another reason, the force of which we have been slow to admit, but which every year's experience brings home with stronger conviction ; namely, that, however much skill and manual dexterity the blind may attain in simple handicraft, very few, if any, can equal ordinary seeing workmen in resolute, persevering hard work. This may be, and probably in most cases is, owing in a slight degree to want of rigid discipline ; it is hard to drive a blind boy or man up to sharp work ; but it is still more owing to want of bodily vigor and activity on the part of the blind them-

selves. Out of twenty-four men employed in the shop, the last year, many are of slender frames and frail health, and only four are as robust and hardy as the average of seeing men.

The same principle, then, holds good among the adult workmen as among the scholars in the Junior Department; — the blind, *as a class*, have not only to contend against the infirmity of blindness, but, moreover, against the consequent inferiority in bodily health and vigor. This, however, as was said of the Junior Department, only creates a still stronger claim upon those who are more highly favored by Providence, and is a powerful argument in support of the policy of considering the Work Department as a permanent part of the Institution, and providing for it accordingly. In order to do this, a building should be erected especially for the purpose of a workshop, and furnished with all those aids and conveniences for the blind which it has been impossible to provide in a building originally designed for another purpose. We should have been disposed, perhaps, to take this step already, had it not been for some doubts which have arisen concerning the expediency of considering the present location of the Institution as its permanent one. On this subject we may as well say a few words here.

The extraordinary growth of South Boston within the few last years makes it almost certain that the Institution will soon be closely surrounded by dwelling-houses. The great rise in the value of land, while it prevents us from extending our own narrow limits, offers an opportunity of selling the property for a sum which would suffice to purchase a large tract of land and erect a good building in the neighbourhood of the city.

Then there is the evil, which has been severely felt in dry seasons, of a scarcity of water.

This and some other disadvantages, serious as they are, have been hitherto more than counterbalanced by great and obvious advantages which the present situation affords. But, during the last year, the city authorities found it necessary to cut down Broadway in front of the building, and H Street, on the east side, so considerably as to cause great inconvenience to the inmates and injury to the property. The thrifty trees on the north and east sides, which have been so carefully nurtured, and which add so much to the beauty and comfort of the place, must all come down. This is an evil which might be borne, and with time and patience partly remedied; but another, of still greater magnitude, was for some time apprehended. It had become necessary for the city authorities to establish some grade for the future streets which could be counted upon as permanent. It was proposed, therefore, that Broadway should be lowered still more, and then be made the highest grade, leaving the streets sloping away from it northerly and southerly to the sea-shore. Now, when it is considered that Broadway is already twenty-one feet lower than the floor of our basement story, and that the ascent is now very steep, it will be seen that to lower it still more would make the house almost inaccessible from the front. But the evil would be much greater on the east and south sides; for, Broadway remaining the highest level, and the hill behind the Institution being cut down, the street in the rear would be thirty-two feet lower than our basement; while, on the east side, the angle of descent to the street would be about forty-five degrees.



This plan, however desirable for the convenience and prosperity of the great population which the peninsula of South Boston will soon contain, would render the building now occupied by the Institution nearly untenable by blind persons ; for it would then be perched upon a pyramid of earth, and held up by a bank-wall on one side, and by a very steep embankment on the front and rear, so that there would be hardly a foot of level ground or of agreeable slope around it.

It seemed probable that this grade for the streets would be adopted, for it was obviously the one which would be most convenient and advantageous to the future population ; we did not wish, therefore, to oppose a measure which the public good called for, but turned our thoughts towards the subject of a removal of the Institution, and a committee was appointed to find a suitable situation. Great pains were taken to explore the neighbourhood of the city, and many spots were examined ; but it was very difficult to find one that united all the desired advantages of good soil, abundance of pure water for drinking and bathing, pure air, freedom from nuisances, and easy accessibility to the city. The comparison with other situations brought into stronger light the advantages of the present one.

During the season, passed in deliberation and cautious examination, it became certain that one strong objection to the present situation would be removed ; for the city government purchased one of the neighbouring hills, called Dorchester Heights, as the site of a reservoir for the Cochituate water ; so that within a year or two there will be an abundant supply of pure water at hand. It has also become probable, that,



instead of making Broadway the highest grade for the future streets, and cutting away twenty-eight feet immediately behind our building, Fourth Street, farther to the rear, will be the highest grade ; in which case, though the value of the building and ground will be impaired for our uses, it will not be nearly so much so as it would be by the first plan.

In view of all these circumstances, we have taken no definite steps in the premises, but recommend the subject to the consideration of the next Board. If it should be thought advisable to retain the present situation, we would recommend that a building should be erected at once for the accommodation of the Work Department. There is no doubt, that, if a good and commodious shop is built, much more work can be done and more blind people benefited. The shops now occupied by the men are not more than will be needed by the Junior Department.

The present condition of the treasury will warrant the outlay of a few thousand dollars for so desirable an object. It will be seen by the Treasurer's Report, which is herewith submitted, that the funds have been considerably increased during the year. This is owing to the munificent provisions made in favor of the Institution by the late William Oliver, Esq., of Dorchester, in his will. That gentleman directed that his property should be divided into three equal parts, and the usufruct thereof enjoyed by his brother and his two sisters during their lives ; that, upon the death of his brother, the whole of his third should be given unconditionally to our Institution ; upon the death of his eldest sister, her third should be given unconditionally to the Massachusetts General

Hospital; and upon the death of his youngest sister, her third should be divided between the two institutions.

The brother died before Mr. Oliver himself, and that gentleman, in order to obviate any possible technical difficulties, added a codicil to his will, by which he confirmed the disposition already made in favor of this Institution. The anxiety manifested upon this occasion lest his will should not be valid, and the careful measures taken while he was languishing under the sickness which proved to be mortal, show clearly that Mr. Oliver had not made the disposition of his property hastily or lightly; but that he was really interested in its final destination. Like a conscientious steward, to whom God had intrusted much, he wished first to provide for those whose natural claims upon him were the strongest, and then to make his riches useful to the blind and sick. He accompanied his gift with no directions; he encumbered it with no conditions; but believing that good and wise men would come after him, and that they would know better than he could possibly foresee in what particular manner it should be applied for the benefit of those for whom he destined it, he gave it into their hands as trustingly as he did unostentatiously. The whole manner of the act was in keeping with his life and character,—the resolute and quiet fulfilment of a purpose deliberately and conscientiously formed.

It is not our part to eulogize Mr. Oliver; he would not desire it, could he speak his wishes; his charity was of the kind which warms and vivifies by heat hidden beneath the surface, not that which crac-

kles and makes itself seen in flame and smoke. We cannot forbear, however, to give a brief biographical notice of him.

Mr. William Oliver was born in Boston, in 1781, and died in Dorchester, April 6, 1847, aged 66 years. He was bred a merchant, and was distinguished, even among the remarkable men whose high qualities make trade honorable here, by his accuracy, promptness, and fidelity in all business transactions, great or small, and in the discharge of all trusts committed to him. He could not himself practise, and would not tolerate in his associates, any indirection or any delay. He sought for no business except his own; but when any was imposed upon him by others, he did it in the shortest, straightest, and quickest way that he knew.

His neighbours, who knew his sterling qualities, placed the most entire confidence in him, and sometimes forced upon him offices and trusts, the duties of which he performed not the less faithfully because they were unwelcome to him and ungenial to his tastes. Many years since, he retired entirely from business, and from the public eye, and spent the quiet evening of his life in his favorite occupations, reading and the care and culture of his garden.

His fortune, which he earned by his own industry, he has planted as good seed in good ground, and we trust, that, with God's blessing, it will long continue to bear good fruit.

As far as the amount of property given is concerned, Mr. Oliver is the greatest benefactor our Institution has known; for his executors have already paid over to the Treasurer the sum of thirty thousand dollars, and will probably pay nearly as much more.

The Printing Department has not been idle during the year; but it has not accomplished so much as is desirable, in the way of printing new works. A small sum only has been appropriated for this purpose. The fifth volume of the Cyclopædia has been completed. Several months were occupied in preparing new maps for our school, and a set of large maps for a new Institution in the West. We trust that the work of printing will be carried on in future years, until select libraries of standard books of science and reference can be placed within the reach of the blind, in different parts of our country.

We consider the work of printing books in raised letters of great importance, because not only our own pupils, but those of all other institutions, and all blind persons who have learned to read, can be benefited thereby.

There has been but slight change in the persons employed in the various departments of the Institution during the last year.

The school has been under the charge of Mr. N. Littlefield and Miss M. C. Paddock, with three assistants, two of whom, Miss Sophia Carter and Mr. J. M. Sturtevant, are blind persons, who were themselves formerly pupils in the school. Mr. Sturtevant recently graduated with credit to himself at Dartmouth College. These teachers have been diligent and faithful in the discharge of their several duties.

Mr. A. Werner continues to be teacher of vocal and instrumental music, and his pupils make about the same progress as in former years.

The sales-room is under the immediate direction of Mr. J. W. Patten, formerly a pupil of the Institution;

and to him are owing the system and good order with which its minute affairs are managed.

The general care and oversight of the whole, as well as the immediate responsibility for the expenses of each department, the preparation of books for the press, and the correspondence of the Institution, devolves upon the Director, Dr. S. G. Howe.

That gentleman having signified that his duties to his family made it undesirable for him to reside in the Institution, we have been satisfied with such arrangements as would provide for the safety of the pupils in case of fire or accident by night, which is done by the presence of the matron, the teachers, the music-master, and the overseer of work. Indeed, the rules and regulations adopted at the very beginning of the establishment required only that the Director "should be in daily attendance," and take the general management. We have been pleased to meet Dr. Howe's wishes in this respect. His services to the Institution continue to be most important. It is a source of great satisfaction to the Trustees, that they are able still to command them.

It has for many years been the policy of the Trustees to interfere as little as possible with the management of the internal affairs of the Institution, — to appoint a gentleman in whom they could have confidence, and to look to him for the general results. In regard to the management of funds, however, a system of strict accountability has been observed. All the funds and all the income are received by the Treasurer, who pays out money as it is wanted, upon the exhibition of an order from the Auditors of Accounts. The Director controls the disbursements,



and his accounts are examined monthly by the Auditors, who require vouchers for all the items.

This general policy has hitherto been successful ; quite as much so, perhaps, when we look at the principal results, as would have been attendant upon one which should take the responsibility from the Director, and throw it upon committees of the Board.

THOMAS G. CARY.  
J. J. DIXWELL.  
STEPHEN FAIRBANKS.  
JOHN D. FISHER.  
JOHN HOMANS.  
SAMUEL P. LOUD.  
HORACE MANN.  
SAMUEL MAY.  
JAMES K. MILLS.  
ROBERT RANTOUL.  
GEORGE R. RUSSELL.  
CHARLES SUMNER.

ANNUAL MEETING OF THE CORPORATION,

JANUARY 10TH, 1848.

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The Vice-President, Edward Brooks, in the chair.

The Annual Report of the Trustees was presented and accepted. It was then

*Resolved*, That the Report be committed to the next Board of Trustees to be printed.

The Treasurer's Report was then presented, accompanied by the necessary vouchers; and it was

*Resolved*, That the same be accepted.

The inventories of property, real and personal, were also submitted to the Board.

A communication was received from Dr. Homans, declining to be a candidate for reëlection as Trustee; upon which it was

*Resolved*, That the Secretary be requested to present the thanks of this Board to Dr. Homans for his long and valuable services as Trustee.

The Board then proceeded to the choice of officers for the ensuing year, and the following persons were chosen

OFFICERS OF THE CORPORATION,  
FOR 1848.

PRESIDENT,  
RICHARD FLETCHER.

VICE-PRESIDENT,  
EDWARD BROOKS.

TREASURER,  
T. B. WALES, JR.

SECRETARY,  
SAMUEL G. HOWE.

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| TRUSTEES,               |                                                |
| THOMAS G. CARY,         | } <i>In behalf<br/>of the<br/>Corporation.</i> |
| THEOPHILUS P. CHANDLER, |                                                |
| J. J. DIXWELL,          |                                                |
| JOHN D. FISHER,         |                                                |
| SAMUEL MAY,             |                                                |
| JAMES K. MILLS,         |                                                |
| GEORGE R. RUSSELL,      |                                                |
| CHARLES SUMNER,         |                                                |

The Board of Visitors, consisting of the Governor, Lieutenant-Governor, President of the Senate, Speaker of the House, &c., have since appointed

|                       |                                                   |
|-----------------------|---------------------------------------------------|
| STEPHEN FAIRBANKS,    | } <i>Trustees in<br/>behalf of<br/>the State.</i> |
| SAMUEL P. LOUD,       |                                                   |
| HORACE MANN,          |                                                   |
| ROBERT RANTOUL, Sen., |                                                   |



## APPENDIX A.

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INSTITUTION FOR THE BLIND, }  
*Boston, January 5, 1848.* }

TO THE TRUSTEES.

GENTLEMEN,—There are several subjects connected with the education of the blind, and touching closely their welfare as a class, about which I desire to submit to you my views more fully than I have been able to do in my Monthly Reports. I will, therefore, take the opportunity of doing so at this, the last meeting of your Board. If the subjects touched upon are more numerous, and the remarks more diffuse, than is agreeable, you will bear with them in consideration of their object and intentions. It is the duty of those connected with institutions for the blind to obtain and distribute all the information which they can respecting that interesting class of persons. The public and men of science naturally look to institutions such as ours for correct information, and the more minute this is, the better. Every thing should be done that can be done with fairness to inspire people with some of the interest which we feel in those whom we have selected as objects of care; we may set forth the touching nature of their infirmity,—the dark and



dreary places in which the lines of life have fallen to them ; we may show their good qualities, their high capacities, their pressing need of aid and comfort ; we may appeal to justice and humanity in their behalf ; but we may keep back no truth and no knowledge which will tend to a perfect understanding of the subject. It is natural that individuals and institutions, when they first undertake the care and instruction of a class of unfortunate persons who had been forgotten and neglected, should look upon them with partiality, should disregard all obstacles and difficulties in their path, and think only of final success. Their enthusiasm extends to the public, and the interest in the class of unfortunates increases, until they almost begin to be considered as objects of envy, instead of pity. But the pendulum never swings too far one way without going back about as far the other way.

The history of the institutions for the blind in this country has been the same in many respects. The blind were considered as necessarily uneducated, helpless, and wretched. People recognized the peculiar and touching nature of their infirmity, and, while they forbade all others to beg in the street, they tolerated the blind man, and dropped an alms into his hat to keep him a little longer out of his last dwelling on earth, — the almshouse. This was all wrong ; — the pendulum had swung too far one way. Then came along men and showed that the blind could be taught to read and write, and to acquire various kinds of knowledge, and also to work at many trades ; and people were greatly interested, and built up schools, and began to think that the sightless scholars in them

could learn faster and more thoroughly than seeing children, and that they would become teachers, preachers, musicians, and artisans, and that the beggar's hat was to be changed for a purse of gold. This, too, was wrong ; — the pendulum had swung too far the other way ; and it behooves us to counteract, as far as possible, the bad effects which always follow the momentary prevalence of error.

Within ten years after the organization of this Institution, others were established in New York, Pennsylvania, Ohio, Kentucky, and Virginia ; the first two almost simultaneously with this. In all of them, the powers and capacities of the blind seem to have been overrated, and fond expectations to have been formed, that the great majority of them would be able to support themselves by filling some desirable and responsible posts in society, and that the rest could do so by manual labor.

I think that most of those who have had the charge of those institutions will confess that their expectations have been disappointed ; that many of the blind will say their hopes have been cruelly dashed to the ground ; and that some of them will exclaim, in the bitterness of their hearts, that it would have been better to leave them in ignorance than to enlighten and cultivate their minds, so as to make them more sensible to the stings of poverty and the shame of dependence. This is the natural reaction ; let us see how to correct it.

The institutions for the blind in this country have already done great good ; this cannot be denied or gainsaid. On the other hand, they have not fulfilled the expectations and prophecies of their friends ; and

perhaps one reason of this is, that those expectations were unreasonable, and their very unreasonableness has made the partial success seem even less than it would otherwise have done. I cannot hide from myself, and I would not hide from others, my own disappointment in this respect. My own feelings and views have been so modified by experience, that I see how many things could have been done better than they were done. My wish is to extract from the experience of the past a benefit for the future. I believe that greater good would have followed our efforts for the elevation of the blind to their proper sphere, if they themselves had better understood their powers and capacities, and we had better known their real wants, and their fitness for different stations in life.

In my remarks about the character and capacity of the blind *as a class*, I must be understood, of course, to speak generally. The exceptions may be numerous. There are many blind persons to whom the remarks will not apply,—persons of high natural endowments, of energy, and perseverance; all such will know how to make the necessary allowance; I think, too, they will generally confirm my statements and opinions.

If we find that the condition and circumstances of any class of persons, whose welfare we would fain promote, are such as to cause undue development of any part of their character, we should strive in the spirit of kindness to correct them. A just degree of self-esteem is very important for success, especially in this country, where every man pushes his own claims; but if it is excessive in an individual, while the obstacles to his advancement are insurmountable, it becomes a source of pain and mortification.

The condition and treatment of the blind when children are such as to develop this feeling, and also the love of approbation, very strongly; and if their treatment and training during youth go to strengthen such feelings still more, and afterwards it is found impossible to obtain the desired advancement and consideration, pain and mortification surely follow. My meaning will be more clearly shown by considering how the development of these mental qualities operates upon the character of blind persons at different ages. A blind child is very much noticed *on account of his blindness*; every thing which he does or says is considered as remarkable; his blindness brings gratification to his love of approbation, which, with its twin sister, self-esteem, is rapidly developed, and he becomes *proud of being blind*. As he grows older, and begins to think of playing his part in the drama of life, he finds that the higher parts are closed to him; he finds that what was considered in a child as an object of interest and endearment is looked upon in a young man as a cause for pity and aid; but he has passed the age when childish endearments are needed, — he wants independence and superiority, not pity and aid; he no longer likes the notice which his infirmity calls out, and *he becomes ashamed of being blind*. This feeling is very strong and very general. Of course, the first wish would be for sight, —

“ Give us to see, — we ask no more ”; —

but next to this would come the wish to be *thought to see*, and to be considered equal in this respect to other persons. To many the simple fact of blindness is a small affair, but to be considered blind is an important

and vexatious one. Now this shows something wrong, either in their training, or in the condition of society in which they live, and probably in both.

It is desirable on every account, then, that the real condition and capacities of the blind should be known by those who have to train them and those who have afterwards to live with them ; and that the blind should know what they have to expect in life. It is well, in a word, that we comprehend the full measure of the infirmity of the blind, and the disabilities which it necessarily brings. The nearer we can arrive at a true knowledge of the case, the better. The blind, as a class, will be more kindly and justly treated, if it is known that the infirmity of blindness is really greater than it has been supposed to be.

It is my purpose to contribute the result of my experience and my reflections towards a just knowledge of the case. I cannot, perhaps, do this without offending some in the tenderest points, their self-esteem and their love of clan. My consolation for this must be the consciousness of good intent, and confidence of good results. However it may offend some to unveil the shield of truth, it never kills any but the progeny of error.

THE BLIND, AS A CLASS, ARE INFERIOR TO OTHER PERSONS IN MENTAL POWER AND ABILITY.

The truth of this will not be readily admitted. The opinions put forth in almost every Report of the institutions for the blind in this country, in almost all books upon the subject, and even in my own earlier writings, may be brought to disprove it ; nevertheless, it will be found true.

The early Reports of this Institution represented



the scholars as being, for the most part, very intelligent and promising, not only as compared with other blind persons, but as compared with seeing persons; and they certainly were more so than any succeeding classes have been. The same thing has been remarked in other schools; the first scholars received are usually the best, and there are some reasons why they should be so. To say nothing of the zeal with which both teachers and scholars usually set out upon a new enterprise, there are some other reasons why the first class in a new establishment should be of superior ability. The proposal to teach a class of persons who had never been taught in schools, especially so novel and extraordinary a proposal as that of teaching blind children to read and write, would appear to most people extravagant or absurd; while others would look upon it with distrust and suspicion. The intelligent parents of blind children would alone comprehend the possibility of the thing; and even they would not think of trying the experiment, except upon a child of more than ordinary ability. Then the character of the children would have some influence; the bold and enterprising, and those who possessed a strong desire for knowledge, would alone be eager to accept an opportunity of leaving home to make the doubtful experiment of learning by a new system.

As soon, however, as the school succeeds and becomes known, the blind, without distinction, — the bright and the backward, the bold and the timid, — resort to it, and then we have an opportunity of judging the whole class. Now it will be found, that, while the schools for the blind present a certain number of children who make more rapid progress in intellectual

studies than the average of seeing children, they also present a much larger number who are decidedly inferior to them in physical and in mental vigor. If an exception be found to this, it will be in the Royal Institute at Paris, which has, within a few years, by means of the liberal patronage of the government, and the zeal and ability of its Director, Monsieur Dufau, resumed the place which it originally held in the front rank of excellence among establishments of this kind. But in that school a singular advantage is enjoyed, as far as the appearance of things goes; — the scholars are received only at the age of twelve years; and a selection of less than two hundred is made from the great number of applicants which must be found in the whole population of France, for no other establishment exists there, while in the United States there are eight. We might as well take the average of bodily and mental vigor among the cadets at West Point as the standard whereby to measure the youth of the United States generally, as judge of the blind of France by the inmates of the Royal Institute of Paris.

After experience has shown us a fact, it is easy to see how we ought to have inferred its existence beforehand by *a priori* reasoning. The human mind is first developed solely by means of stimulus or excitement derived through the senses. Some of the senses excite only particular faculties of the mind, which cannot be excited and developed by any other sense; thus, the musical taste is developed by action of the hearing alone, nor can any other organ of sense do the duty of the ear by vicarious action.

Now the sense of sight is very important to our

mental growth. In its *direct* action it is even more important than hearing, the chief action of which is indirect, giving us *language*, the most important tool for the mind to work with.

Sight not only contributes to the growth and development of the mind generally, but it addresses itself to several faculties in particular, which without it would never awake in this stage of being. Thus, the æsthetic sense, or taste for the beautiful in color and light and shade, with all the consequent pleasure and refinement which it gives, must ever lie as dormant in the mind of a blind man as in a tortoise. Nor is the effect of this confined to the mere knowing faculties, but it extends more or less to all the intellectual and even moral character; for who shall say how much our disposition to adore the Creator is strengthened by contemplation of the beauties and glories of his creation?

Blindness, then, always and necessarily cuts off some of the means by which alone certain intellectual faculties are developed and some mental qualities are formed. To suppose there can be a full and harmonious development of character without sight is to suppose that God gave us that noble sense quite superfluously.

But it is said, and with much plausibility, that the loss of one sense makes us exercise the others so continually and so effectually, as to acquire a power quite unknown to common persons. This is true, and it goes far to compensate the blind man whose pursuit is knowledge. He may learn vastly more of *some* subjects than other men, but there are capacities of his nature that can never be developed; perfect harmony

can never be there, any more than perfect physical beauty and proportion.

This, however, is somewhat speculative reasoning, and there is no need of such to prove the proposition, that the blind, *as a class*, are inferior in mental power and ability to ordinary persons. It is useless to say one single word about the dependence of the mind upon the body in this state of existence; there can be no continuous mental health and vigor without bodily health and vigor. By comparing the mortality among 617 blind persons, and among 1380 young men in college, during a period of ten years, I find that the difference is as 98 to 44; that is to say, taking 1000 persons of each class and about the same age, and watching them through life, we shall find that when all the blind have died, there will still be about half of the seeing ones alive. In other words, the chance of life among the blind is only one half what it is among the seeing.

The data from which these inferences are drawn are indeed few, and perhaps are somewhat unfavorable to the blind, because the persons whom they are compared with, students in colleges, are generally select youth; but, after making all allowances, they fully confirm what would be the *a priori* inference, and what must be the opinion of observing persons, that sickness and mortality among the blind are much greater than among the seeing.

The standard of bodily health and vigor, then, being lower among the blind, the inevitable inference is, that mental power and ability will be less also.

In answer to a series of questions put to a most intelligent blind man, who has had ample means of

knowledge, and whose deep interest in the welfare of his fellows would prevent him from having any unfavorable bias, the following information has been obtained : —

“ The number of males from which I make my estimate is one hundred. Of these, fifty are *decidedly inferior* in mental ability to the average of persons of their age and condition, and of these fifty, twenty-five are bordering on imbecility. Of the one hundred, three only could be considered superior, in point of bodily health and strength, to the average of seeing persons of their age and condition in life. Fifteen of the one hundred may be considered superior in mental ability to the average of seeing persons of their age. Of these fifteen, six were born blind.”

Questions put to teachers have been answered in about the same way : — “ Of a class of thirty-four boys, nineteen were pronounced decidedly inferior in mental ability, seven to be almost imbecile or *silly*, and only three to be slightly above the average of intellectual powers : of the three, two were born blind. Not one of the thirty-four was above the average of seeing boys in physical health and strength.”

A female teacher says, — “ Out of forty-seven blind persons under my care, sixteen were decidedly inferior in mental powers to the average of seeing persons of their age and condition in life ; and of these sixteen, five were bordering upon imbecility.”

The superintendent of one of our chief institutions writes to me as follows : — “ The number of our pupils is one hundred and thirty-five ; of these there are seventeen in possession of ‘ superior talent,’ thirteen of whom were born blind. Of ‘ inferior talent ’



there are *thirty-five*, of whom twenty-two were born blind. There are also TEN of a very low grade of intellect, hardly rising above imbecility; and of these, eight were ‘born blind.’ Of vigorous and well-developed forms there are thirty-one, *nine* of whom were born blind. Of *weak and puny frames*, there are FORTY-FOUR, of whom thirty-one were born blind.”

He says, — “I should think that a comparison of all others who have ever been connected with the Institution would not materially vary the above results.”

This gentleman adds, very justly, — “I send replies to your queries *as well as I am able*, but in this mental mensuration you must look only for approximate results. I cannot vouch, in all cases, for the accuracy of my calipers.”

It is evident that this gentleman, with his usual kindness of heart, inclined the balance toward the side of his charge as much as he could with justice; for he says, — “In enumerating those of ‘superior talent,’ I have included *three* noted for little else except *musical* talent.” Now it is very common to find that persons who have what is called “musical talent,” especially where it is confined to excellence of time, tune, and voice, have no other talent, and rank below mediocrity in point of intellect.

Taken, however, in its most favorable light, the comparison made by this gentleman furnishes a melancholy confirmation of the truth of the opinion I have expressed above, concerning the blind as a class. In what common school of one hundred and thirty-five scholars, will there be found FORTY-FOUR chil-

dren of puny and weak frames, thirty-five of inferior talent, and ten ranking little above idiots?

In reply to questions addressed to a gentleman who has had much experience in teaching, and who was for some time at the head of one of our best institutions for the blind, the following opinions are obtained.

“My observation has resulted in the belief, that, where blindness comes on *naturally, at an early age*, though it may not be called hereditary, yet it is either the effect of some hereditary disease, as scrofula, for instance, or of some physical deficiency, which, though manifested chiefly in the visual organs, affects the whole system, and greatly reduces the amount of vital energy. Such children will be found equally deficient in intellectual power. All that the most judicious training can do will never so develop the physical powers they *do* possess, much less will it so supply a defective physical organization, as to make these children, aside from their blindness, sound in body and mind. They are generally short-lived, unless early placed under the judicious and fostering care of some well-managed institution, expressly adapted to their peculiar condition and wants. Even then, as they grow up, the vast difference between them and seeing children, in vital energy and intellectual power, becomes more and more apparent. The inference, then, is plain, that the *naturally* blind must be, *as a class*, far inferior physically and intellectually to the seeing; and experience confirms this view of the case.

“A person of sound constitution and well-developed powers may lose his sight *by accident*, and yet, in an institution for the blind, may be forced to take

such exercise as will keep his physical energies unimpaired. A *young man*, thus circumstanced, though his mind should lack its wonted elasticity, might even excel the seeing. This is confirmed by my own observation. Such cases are exceptions, however.

“If the *accidental* loss of sight occurs in *manhood*, or at a *more advanced* age, the mind will seldom be roused to much action, and the capacity for receiving instruction will be small indeed.

“Those who have been *accidentally* deprived of sight while *very young*, especially if left to the injudicious kindness of their parents, suffer from want of suitable exercise and training, and the lack of mental energy is proportionate to the physical deficiency.

“An institution for the instruction of the blind, one of the great benevolent enterprises of the nineteenth century, has a claim on the public never again to be overlooked. But in providing instruction for the blind, only a small part of our duty is done. Humanity and justice call upon the seeing to give their blind brethren a ‘home,’ where those who are capable may find a field for their industry, and where all may contribute to the enjoyments, and share in the comforts, of a fireside peculiarly their own.”

Thus we see that the blind, as a class, do not labor under the disadvantage of want of sight alone, but that, as compared with others, they have less bodily health and vigor, and less mental power and energy; consequently, their great infirmity is more grievous to them, and is a more serious burden to society, than it would otherwise be.

The knowledge of this truth, instead of making the blind less interesting, makes them more so. They

have a right, not only to more sympathy, but to more aid and assistance. They are our brethren by their birthright; their infirmity is no fault of their own; and they may claim at the hands of society, not only education, but the means and opportunity of useful and honorable occupation.

I shall show, in speaking of the Work Department, that the infirmity of blindness prevents men from entering into fair competition with others in the mechanic arts, and how this disadvantage may be compensated for by special provisions. In the mean time, let us inquire briefly into the causes of blindness, and of the inferiority of the blind in bodily health and vigor, in the humble hope that the inquiry may tend to lessen the evil.

In doing this we shall not transcend our office, because public charitable institutions have other duties besides the care and culture of their immediate inmates, and among those duties is the gathering of knowledge upon all subjects closely or remotely connected with the infirmity under which those inmates labor. The discharge of our duty to our pupils does not discharge the wider duty to humanity; much less does it call upon us to keep out of sight any facts which may tend to make those pupils less interesting, at first blush, to those who take a false view of things.

In the first place, let us distinguish between those born blind, and those who become blind by accident in early life; as for those who become blind from old age, they form a class apart.

Upon superficial inquiry, it would seem that very few persons are born blind. Parents dislike to suppose their offspring are imperfect in any way. The

mother refuses to admit that her child is deaf and dumb, and fondly clings to the hope that he will yet speak, though he has been silent for two, or even three or four years, among his younger companions, who prattle around him. When, at last, the sad conviction forces itself upon her mind, that she can never hear him lisp her name, she tries to think that some accident after his birth brought on the infirmity. So it is in the case of a sightless child; unless the eyeballs are absolutely wanting (which is very rarely the case), the mother refuses to believe that her offspring is blind. If its eyes are in a state of violent inflammation, necessarily followed by destruction, or if they are opaque with humors which are reproduced as fast as removed, and she is at last forced to admit his blindness, she throws the whole blame on the luckless physician, for not undertaking the hopeless task of curing an incurable disease; or, if he did undertake it, for not using the right medicine. Some unfortunate poultice or powder is ever after regarded by her as the peccant cause of an infirmity which she herself entailed upon her offspring.

But I would include among the class of "born blind" many who lose their sight long after birth; that is, those in whom the original texture of the eye was so loose, and so predisposed to disease, that the slightest inflammation or accident would destroy the sight. Such persons, if not born blind, were certainly born to become blind. Now in these cases the blindness is *primâ facie* evidence of an infirmity, — a *bodily infirmity*, which, *other things being equal*, will lessen the sufferer's chance of healthy and vigorous mental growth. But there is a deeper consideration behind this. In



most of these cases, the blindness is only a *symptom or local manifestation of some general cause which vitiates, or affects unfavorably, the whole bodily organization*. Call it weakness, or scrofula, or what we will, there it is, and it generally involves the brain and nervous system ; they lack the natural tone and vigor, and consequently the sufferer cannot put forth the natural degree of mental and moral power ; he is as weak and irresolute in thought and purpose, as he is feeble and flabby in fibre.

Those of the second class, that is, those who become blind by accident or violent disease, are of course affected in their mental development only so far as want of sight is want of an advantage for study or bodily exercise. This must ever be a positive disadvantage ; it is one, however, which may be, and in some cases is, overcome by great resolution and perseverance. But all intelligent persons who have had the management of blind youth, if they will only reflect upon it, must admit the lamentable prevalence among them of a low tone of the bodily organization, and the consequent want of persevering energy and resolution.

Doubtless this is often owing, in a great measure, to the habits of life into which their infirmity causes them to fall. They are but little in the open air ; they are made tender by attempts to shield them from the changes of the atmosphere ; they are too warmly clad ; they enjoy the monopoly of the rocking-chair, and the warmest seat by the fire. The effect of all this mistaken kindness is seen afterwards in the effeminacy of body and feebleness of purpose which make the blind so fond of a sedentary life, and so much

indisposed to active mental or bodily exertion. Add to this the real and positive difficulties which their infirmity puts in the way of locomotion, to overcome which would require more than common energy, and we have other incidental causes of feebleness of health and strength. But, over and above these, there is, in a great majority of cases, an original and constitutional feebleness of organization. If you look into any school for the blind, you will see a great number of pale, puny, slender youths, and though they and those about them think they are in tolerable health, yet a moment's comparison with a school for seeing children, where ruddy, plump, active children are the rule, and not the exception, will force you to conclude that want of sight is not the only disadvantage under which the former labor.

Now, whatever may be the case with particular individuals, as a general rule it must be true that persons of feeble health and imperfectly developed bodies are, and ever will be, inferior in mental health and vigor.

Having arrived at this conclusion with regard to the causes, the question arises, Can any thing be done, either to lessen the number of blind persons born into the world, or to improve the physical condition of those who must be born? I think that much can be done in both ways. The number of persons born blind will be diminished when the hereditary transmission of *tendency* to bodily infirmities is well understood. Let us, therefore, consider that part of the natural law, which may be expressed thus : —

BLINDNESS, OR A STRONG CONSTITUTIONAL TENDENCY TO IT, IS VERY OFTEN HEREDITARY.

Men violate the natural laws ; they “ go out of the

way" of nature. Nature would bring them back ; she sends outward ailments as signs of inward infirmities ; this not being enough, she says, I will visit these infirmities upon your children to the third and fourth generation ; if ye will not mind for your own sakes, ye shall for theirs.

I believe that a general knowledge of the existence of this stern and inexorable law will do more to diminish the number of infirmities with which the human race is afflicted than any thing else can do, and I shall therefore dwell still longer upon it in reference to the blind.

The experience of many years, an acquaintance with several hundreds of blind persons, and much personal inquiry, have convinced me that when children are born blind, or when they become blind early in life, in consequence of diseases which do not usually destroy the sight, the predisposing cause can be traced to the progenitors in almost all cases. Moreover, I believe, that, where the predisposing cause cannot be so traced, it is only in consequence of our ignorance, and not because there are exceptions to the rule.

When the parents or relatives of blind children are questioned in a way which seems to imply the suspicion of the existence of some hereditary cause of the infirmity, they at first deny the possibility of such cause, and often repel the supposition indignantly, as something derogatory to the honor of the family. They usually do this, also, in all honesty and sincerity ; for they are not aware of the number and extent of the causes.

A single case, which occurred recently, — one out of a hundred similar ones, — may illustrate my mean-

ing. I was questioning a man as to the causes of the blindness of his son, about which he was not only in ignorance, but, much worse, in error; for he half believed that his wife having seen the eyes of a cat glittering in the dark had something to do with it. As for any hereditary cause, he never dreamed of it; and yet this man himself was exceedingly purblind; he could not see a thing without poking his nose into it; and always went about with his eyes half shut, and winking and blinking, when the daylight was strong. I found, upon inquiry, that *his own sister* was as purblind as himself, and could never bear the strong light of day without half closing her eyes; and, moreover, that his father and mother were of feeble temperament, and *full cousins*.

The hereditary tendency to disease among the progeny of persons related by blood, or of scrofulous or intemperate persons, or of persons whose physical condition is vitiated in various ways, is not seen at once, and may be entirely overlooked, for various reasons. In the first place, there may be only a *strong tendency* or predisposition to some infirmity, as blindness, deafness, insanity, idiocy, &c., which is not developed without some *immediate exciting cause*. Thus, I have known persons of a particular family become blind of one eye in consequence of a slight blow from a chip; then, after some years, become blind of the other from a trifling injury with a finger; or from other causes, so slight as to be borne with impunity by ordinary persons.

Now, if some members of such a family should, by great regularity of life, or by rare good-fortune, escape all accidents or exciting causes which would bring on

disease, they would probably never suspect the existence of their danger. Or if they were fearful of the tendency, and by great caution escaped the danger, it would be exceedingly difficult to prove the existence of any hereditary taint.

It is common to say of certain families, of which, perhaps, only one person was quite mad, that "there is *something odd* about all the members of it." Now, if we could see the manifestations of *tendencies* to a morbid condition of the body, as we see the tendencies to insanity in strange actions of men, we should discover them where none are supposed to exist.

In the second place, diseased tendencies in parents, whether derived from their ancestors, or planted in their constitutions by intemperance or abuse, do not always manifest themselves by the reappearance of the same infirmity or disease in the offspring. Scrofula, for instance, will reappear in a thousand forms; it may be blindness, it may be deafness, it may be white swelling, it may be something else. I have known cases where it was impossible to find any instances of blindness occurring in a family previous to the one under examination, and yet, upon further inquiry, learned that there had been cases of insanity and *mutism* among the immediate relatives. I am forced to conclude, in such cases, that there is some peculiarity in the physical organization of one of the parents or progenitors, which entails upon the offspring strong morbid tendencies.

But laying aside such cases, there are many where the hereditary tendencies to blindness are so manifest in parties who marry, that the probabilities of the offspring being blind are fearfully great. There are cas-



es in which the parents are the authors of their children's blindness, as much as though they gouged their eyes out after they were born. They may sin in ignorance, but God will not remit the penalty of the sin because another had been committed in the neglect of mental culture.

A clear understanding of this law of the transmission of diseased tendencies, both of body and mind, will do much towards banishing disease and suffering from among the children of men.

It will be seen that the wit of man cannot devise a way of escape from the penalty of a violated law of nature ; that not a single debauch, not a single excess, not a single abuse of any animal propensity, ever was or ever can be committed without more or less evil consequences ; that sins of this kind are not and cannot be forgiven. There may be those who will harden their hearts and stiffen their necks, and be willing to bide the consequences to themselves for the sake of the sensual pleasures. But there will appear in the far-off and shadowy future the beseeching forms of little children, — some halt, or lame, or blind, or deformed, or decrepit, — crying, in speechless accents, "Forbear, for our sakes ; for the arrows that turn aside from you are rankling in our flesh" ; others, having the seeds of direful passions, — envy, hatred, malice, uncleanness, — say sadly, "O, bridle your passions, or they will tear us asunder like wild horses !" Then it shall be seen, that, if the fathers will eat sour grapes, the children's teeth shall be set on edge ; that many a mother is responsible for the pride, the vanity, the lust of her daughter ; that many a father is as guilty of the death of his son upon the gallows as though he twisted the rope about his neck with his own hands.

Then many a woman will rouse herself to the stern duty of observance of every law of health, of abstinence from all luxury and all slothfulness, for the sake of those dear ones that may be born to her; and many a man will abandon sensual indulgences which he would have clung to through life but for fear of cursing his future offspring with hellish passions.

Then will some soar to such an exalted pitch of virtue, as to forego their dearest hopes, and resolutely keep aloof from any relations of life that might cause them to hand down bodily or mental infirmities upon the innocent ones of the coming generations.

Then will light be thrown upon the laws of "the pestilence that walketh in darkness" from generation to generation, and the wisdom and goodness of God be made manifest even in them.

Then many a case of blindness, or deafness, or infirmity, instead of being looked upon as a mysterious dispensation of Providence, will be seen to be only the penalty of a violated law which was enacted in kindness and love.

Then the love of God to men will be manifested even in afflictions, and his praise will be perfected out of disease and suffering, as well as out of health and enjoyment.

Then it will be seen, that, if this world is a vale of tears, if it is full of deformity, and suffering, and sickness, and crime, it is man, and not God, that maketh it so.

Another way in which institutions for the blind can be useful to the community, and diminish the number of the class of persons whom they take under their care, is in spreading abroad a knowledge of the best

means of preventing the calamity of blindness in those who are strongly disposed to it hereditarily. This has been done somewhat in former Reports. The means consist in avoidance of sedentary occupations, especially those which try the eyes; great care about reading or working for a long-continued time, or by a feeble light; strict temperance in food and drink; and constant and active exercise in the open air. By these means many a one will have tolerable eye-sight at threescore years, who would otherwise have been purblind at twenty, and quite blind at thirty.

Moreover, great good will be done, if persons having the care of the blind can be persuaded that the way to give them intellectual strength, vigor of purpose, and persevering courage, is to begin by training the body to hardihood and health.

It is not my purpose to dwell upon this subject now, nor, indeed, to lengthen out this already too long Report. I have shown that the infirmity of blindness is greater, even, than is generally supposed; not, however, directly as an affliction, not as a cause of repining and sorrow, but as an obstacle to the development of bodily and mental vigor; a serious and almost insurmountable obstacle, in most cases, to the independence of the sufferers.

It follows that we should do more for them than to teach and train them in schools; we should endeavour to provide them with means for putting themselves more nearly upon a footing with others in the struggle for a livelihood than they can be if dismissed to make their way unaided. I do not dwell now upon the duty of properly directing their moral and religious training, for this is not the place,

I close by earnestly recommending to your attention the suggestions in my Report upon the workshop, about providing aid to those blind who must depend upon the labor of their hands. Many of the considerations urged in this paper will strengthen those urged there.

Very respectfully,

S. G. HOWE.

## APPENDIX B.

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*Boston, January 5, 1848.*

TO THE TRUSTEES.

GENTLEMEN, — I must ask your attention to a few remarks upon the subject of our workshop, the accounts of which are herewith presented.

If you consider the balance-sheet in a mere commercial way, it shows that the shop has cost the Institution \$300.49; but if you look upon it in another light, it shows that the shop has enabled the Institution to give employment, courage, and hope to twenty-eight blind persons, and to pay them nearly two thousand dollars in wages, or, upon an average, \$84.28 each for their year's work, at a cost of only three hundred dollars. Is not this a large harvest from small seed? Surely, what has been lost to the Institution has been gained in tenfold degree by the blind.

It is true, that most of these persons would not have been at the charge of the Institution, but for the establishment of the shop, and something would have been saved by not having to board and lodge them. But, on the other hand, most of them would have been at the charge of somebody, or of the public; and



surely the charge cannot fall anywhere so properly as upon this Institution, which is so generously supported by the State.

In considering the shop, however, in a mere pecuniary view, it should be remembered, that, before it was established as a separate and independent branch of the Institution, five years ago, there was always a considerable sum paid for carrying on such work as was absolutely necessary for teaching the younger scholars their various handicrafts.

Ours is the only institution in the country which provides a separate Work Department, and gives its graduates an opportunity of practising for their own profit the trades which they learned as pupils. All, however, find it necessary to have shops in which the scholars may be taught to work. Now I am confident that not one of them receives enough from the sale of the work to pay for the stock, tools, and the cost of overseers. Nay, I am very much mistaken, if the loss, directly and indirectly, is not considerable. Our own experience and some knowledge of the other establishments make me think so.

Now this item of expense, be it greater or smaller, is saved to our Institution, because all the cost of stock and tools, used by the boys in learning their trades, as well as the expense of overseers, is charged to the shop account, and paid out of the proceeds of the sales. The Work Department, then, costs nothing, except the difference between the expenditures and the receipts from sales, — which, already reduced to three hundred dollars, will soon be nothing, — and the expense of boarding those young men and women who would not have remained as inmates of the Institution but for the existence of the department.

The experiment of this department has now continued five years, and every year its final success seems more and more certain. A few of the workmen have gained what I earnestly desire may be the lot of all of them, a feeling of independence arising from consciousness of ability to support themselves. It is not darkness alone, nor even principally, that makes the pathway of life dreary to the blind man, but a feeling of helplessness, and fear of dependence. One of our workmen lives in his own hired house in the neighbourhood, with his family, which he supports by his labor; others pay their board, and receive no other aid from the Institution than a room to work in, and the profit upon the sale of their work. Now it is to place all, or the greater part, of our blind in this situation, that I have urged, and do still earnestly urge, that our Work Department may be considered a permanent part of the Institution, and put upon such a footing that the work may be done to more advantage than it can be under the present arrangement;—that the business may be extended, and thereby a much greater number of blind persons benefited. I frequently receive applications from the graduates of this and other institutions for permission to enter our shop, but cannot receive them. There is no other similar establishment in the country to which they can go for profitable employment, and therefore I am the more desirous for the extension of our Work Department.

I would waive all argument about the expense, and admit, what is hardly probable, that but very few of the blind can fully earn their own livelihood; still, there is no way in which so much good can be done with a little money as by keeping them steadily and

industriously at work, and enabling them nearly to defray their own expenses. By a little indirect aid, they may pay for their own board and clothing, and procure what are considered by the intelligent working classes in this country the necessary comforts of life.

It is true, that the immediate business of this Institution is to instruct the blind ; to develop their intellectual and spiritual natures ; to prepare them, as well as possible, for making their own way in the world, and becoming useful and happy members of society ; and, having done this, to send them away to their homes, as youth are sent from our academies and schools, to rely upon their friends and their own efforts for success in life. It never was intended to make this Institution an asylum, or a home for the residence and permanent maintenance of blind persons who are too infirm in body or feeble in intellect to take care of themselves, and it should never be suffered to become one. Such persons, strong as is their claim for sympathy and support at the hands of the public, belong anywhere rather than in a school where every thing should serve to fill the young blind with courage and confidence and hope.

But it certainly is one of the objects of this establishment to enable the blind, by a peculiar kind of training, to earn their own livelihood ; and if, after having trained them to diligence and skill, the world does not offer any field for the exercise of their talents, then the Institution should try to open one, if it can do so without any harm to the more immediate objects of its care.

Moreover, if it be true (and I apprehend it is), that

no establishment which receives all the young blind who offer themselves can ever train them in such a way that the majority of them will be sure to earn their own livelihood without any aid,—if, as experience is showing in this country, many of the blind cannot always get work when they know how to work and want to work, — then it becomes a duty to make such arrangements as will prevent their education from proving useless for the practical purposes of life.

It is a sad reality, that society is at present so organized, that men feebler in body than their fellows, and suffering, moreover, under the sorest human infirmity,—sightless men,—when they go forth to strive, by patient toil, to earn an honest crust, must meet, not only with competition, but with opposition. The moment they enter the market-place, they come into antagonism with some others, who try to crowd them to the wall, in virtue of the received maxims of trade. Or if they introduce into the market a new article, and it finds acceptance with the public, rivals instantly start up,—strong men, men with all their senses,—and strive, by *honest competition* with poor blind men, to win the palm of profit.

Besides the difference in bodily advantage, there is this vast difference between a common apprentice, who is sent out into the world with only his hands and his knowledge of his trade for his capital, and a blind youth who has learned a like trade,—that 'the seeing youth readily finds workshops in which every thing is adapted for *working by sight*, while the blind youth cannot find a shop where things are adapted for *working by feeling*.



We can easily teach a boy to make a good mattress or mat without sun-light or candle, but we cannot persuade the manufacturers of those articles to close their shutters and put out the light. A company of blind persons would act strictly upon the rule,—A place for every thing, and every thing in its place, especially edge-tools ; but seeing men leave trap-doors open, chairs and tables in the middle of the floor, and edge-tools everywhere, because they naturally suppose that every workman has eyes in his head, and will not fail to use them. Besides this, the whole method of procedure in their work is different, so that a blind man could hardly pursue his trade in a common shop.

It will be said, — Let him work by himself, let him have a shop or a corner of one, and do his work in his own way. A hundred years ago, nay, fifty, or twenty-five years ago, this would have been easier than it is now. Then there were comparatively many kinds of work which the blind could do ; there were hundreds of daily tasks for which intelligent and sober blind men would have been preferred, such as turning wheels, pulling presses, carding wool, weaving coarse cloths. These and other handicrafts needed only the patient and persevering labor of strong arms ; but, one by one, such simple manual trades have disappeared, — the strong man has been pushed aside by the stronger steam-engine, and the cunning of the human hand has been outdone by fingers and pickers of wood and iron.

Greatly for the comfort and happiness of all will such improvements doubtless prove, when the vastly increased production shall be fairly distributed ; but as yet they are not, and the tireless machines bear hard-



ly upon the humble handwright, whom they drive from his simple craft to one that is more toilsome and less profitable; and still more hardly upon the poor blind man, who cannot leave his loom or his basket-frame to wield the hammer or the pickaxe.

One by one, the simplest trades are becoming subdivided; and independent artisans are becoming hirelings. They no longer work alone, and fashion and finish and sell their own productions. The carpenter and the mason let themselves to the contractor, — the shoemaker and the tinman do the same, — the cobbler and the tinker alone remain; and the end is not yet.

From time immemorial until yesterday, “picking oakum” was the peculiar perquisite of the pauper. Every bit of “old junk” was destined for the almshouse, where aged and feeble fingers picked and fumbled it over, and earned a cent or two a day. Even an active boy or girl could hardly earn a shilling at the work, so that it seemed entailed, beyond all fear of loss, as a very small, but a very certain, source of income to the halt, the blind, the deaf, and the infirm. But, yesterday, there came along a new and strange creature of wood and iron, that had teeth, but no stomach to feed, — that had body and strength, but no back to clothe, — that had limbs and fingers, but no nerves to tire; and he seizes a ton of junk, and with teeth and claws, tears it into more oakum in an hour than a whole almshouse full of paupers could pick in a week, and does his work, too, with a nicety and uniformity that they can never hope to equal.

Such inventions are like long levers in the hands of capital, which serve to raise the aggregate of produc-

tion ; but the fulcrum is apt to be the body of the poor, which is thereby ground to powder.

Strange perversion of the triumph of human intellect, that makes the poor poorer, and the infirm more helpless ! However much we may console ourselves with the hope and the trust that this is but a transition stage in the course of human progress, — that the loss will be only partial and temporary, while the gain will be general and lasting, — that the good tree must at last bring forth good fruit, even for those who dig about it all the day, and water its roots with the sweat of their brows ; nevertheless, we must see to it that the interests of the blind, as a class, do not suffer in the mean time, — that they do not get pinched under the fulcrum of the lever of civilization.

The present is a critical moment in the history of the blind of this country. The chief institutions for their instruction have been in operation more than ten years ; hundreds of young men and women have gone out from them into the world ; and if the greater part of them should fail, in spite of their training, to make their own way, — if they should fall back upon their friends, or upon the almshouse, for support, and become helpless paupers, with increased sensibilities and increased wants, there must be an unfavorable reaction in the public mind respecting them. Now, among the means of helping the blind, without directly bestowing alms upon them, is the opening of workshops where they may have the same advantages which seeing workmen have, — of capital, so that they may have their stock at wholesale cost, and retain their produce through unfavorable seasons, until it commands a fair price, — of working in a company, so

that the work may be subdivided and perfected, and a saving made in fuel, in rent, and in various other matters. It would be well, on many accounts, that such establishments should be separate from the institutions for the instruction of the young blind, and independent of them, to a certain extent. The workmen should either board in private families, or club together and share their expenses among themselves. The latter would, perhaps, be the most desirable, on some accounts. Almost all the offices in a household could be performed by blind persons. If a steward were appointed to provide all things, and assess the actual cost upon the inmates, there would be every inducement to industry and economy. In such establishments difficulties and obstacles would still be found, which could hardly be overcome by all the assistance which the parent institution could give; how much less could they be overcome by blind men working alone and unaided!

A reference to some things in the history of the experiment we have been trying may show some of these difficulties. Our workmen cannot labor to any advantage or profit, except at the simplest trades. The articles which they make must be those of which the material is of small cost, and of which the value arises from the amount of manual labor bestowed upon the fabric. Now it is exceedingly difficult to find articles of this kind, which cannot be made in part by machinery, and, when found, it is difficult to retain the manufacture of them.

Coarse door-mats are of this description, and have long been a staple article of production by the blind. But even this article, so simple, so cheap, and from

which there is so little gain, cannot be depended upon as a permanent source of profitable occupation by the blind. During my late visit to Europe, I found a door-mat so simple in its structure, and presenting so many advantages for this climate, that I brought one home for a sample, and introduced the fabrication of it into our shop. This was the first time, probably, that such mats had ever been made in this country. It was found that our workmen could make them very well, and the manufacture of them was introduced as a regular branch of business. For two years our shop had the monopoly of the manufacture, and the price was purposely put so low as to make it little object for others to enter into the business. These mats began to obtain great favor, for they were found to be very strong and durable; and they were generally known as being made by the blind. But the common consequences followed; the demand increased, and before we could meet it at a reduced price, other persons commenced the business; the usual competition began, and the usual deterioration in the quality of the article followed. As our mats had been sold to dealers, who retailed them out, it was necessary for competitors to present some motive to the dealers to purchase of them, and therefore they offered their articles at a lower price. But the profit was too small at this lower price, provided the same quantity of materials and the same amount of work were put into the mats; these, therefore, were slightly diminished, and mats were produced similar to ours in appearance, but inferior in strength and durability. The difference, however, was so slight as hardly to be known by the appearance of the article, and very



unlikely to be observed in the wear ; for few people would ever notice the fact that their neighbour's door-mat did good service twelve months, while their own, with no more usage, lasted only ten months ; yet the difference of one tenth in the stock and labor expended in the manufacture of the article would make a great difference in the profits of the capitalist who carried it on.

I mention this to show how hard it is to find any work for the blind, without bringing them into antagonism with workmen who have the advantage over them not only of good eyesight, but of sufficient capital. I do not mention it to find any fault with the persons who so compete in this particular case, for they act only upon the received rules of trade, according to which all such competition is fair and honorable, and by which the weakest must go to the wall. I do not complain that the laboring man, who has a family to support by his hands, should profit by the advantage which his eyes give him over the blind man, and take up his trade ; nor even of the wealthy dealers, who hire men and women at a very low price to do a kind of work by which the blind were earning a hard living ; for such are the spirit of the age and the laws of trade, that all this is to be expected ; but I may indulge the hope that the time will come when it will be seen that there are other interests besides those which seem immediate, — that society belongs to us as well as we to it, and that by promoting the interest of all its members we promote our own. Then society will not think to do its duty to the blind, the deaf, and the infirm, by throwing upon them gifts and alms, that crush the spirit while they seem to aid the body,



but will set apart and leave for them such kinds of social labor as they can best perform. Indeed, the blind may claim such labors as *a right*; for surely no right is more sacred than that of exercising one's talents in a useful and profitable manner. If every child born into the community has a right to food for his body and knowledge for his mind, — and surely in this age and country none will deny him this, — then has he a right to some useful employment, for without it food and knowledge become but curses, — they had better have been withheld.

It cannot be doubted, however, that there are still some kinds of work which cannot as yet be done by machinery, and which are well fitted for the blind, provided they can be aided as other workmen are aided. These have the advantage of workshops already established, and furnished with plenty of capital. Our Institutions should be the capitalists of the blind, but they should seek no pecuniary advantage themselves; they should be willing to make a considerable outlay in the beginning, and expect their return, not in money, but in a richer harvest of good.

It may seem that to establish a shop, to endow it with capital, and try through its means to secure certain work for the blind, will be to act upon the very spirit of antagonism which has been shown to be so hostile to their interests; but if ever it can be justifiable to favor one class at the expense of another, it is surely in the case of those who already labor under a grievous infirmity and a heavy disadvantage. However, it would hardly amount to this. We should simply do something towards bringing the blind nearer to an equality with other workmen.

Moreover, I would recommend that in extending our Work Department, and putting it upon a lasting foundation, we should organize it in such a manner as would be least open to objections of any kind. The plan which I recommend for its enlargement and permanent organization is this : —

That a large and commodious wooden building be erected, early in the spring, for the more convenient and economical management of the business. I think there can be no doubt of the wisdom of this step. If the Work Department is to be considered as a permanent branch of the Institution, a new shop is needed at once. If the establishment should be removed from South Boston within two or three years, the building, if properly constructed, could be easily changed into dwelling-houses, such as are in great demand here.

There arises the important question, whether the workmen should continue to live in the main building with the younger scholars, and go to the shop daily to work, or whether they should live separately. My own opinion is, that they should live separately, by all means, both for their own sake and that of the younger scholars. There are many reasons for this. The regulations for the domestic government and discipline of boys should not, of course, be imposed upon young men, and yet the existence of what the boys consider a privileged class in the very midst of them is liable to create discontent. Sometimes the oldest boy in school is older than the youngest member of the Work Department. Sometimes adults are received into the Work Department, who were not trained in our school, or, indeed, in any school, — men whose habits of life and thought are formed, who have, perhaps,

been soldiers or sailors, and who could hardly be of any profit to boys as associates. But it is not pleasant or desirable to shut out such men from the common sitting-room of the family, and to keep them to their own apartments, during the evening, and in their leisure hours. All experience shows the evil of herding men together, and depriving them of the humanizing influences of the family circle. The blind, especially, need those influences, and in planning an establishment we should try to provide them, or something which will be a near approach to them.

I would recommend, therefore, that the building should be constructed in such a manner as to answer the purpose of a boarding-house for about twenty-five persons, and also for a workshop. The basement story, if large, high, and airy, would serve for kitchen, eating-room, and sitting-room. The next two stories would serve for shops, and the attics for sleeping-chambers. The chamber furniture now used by the men could be removed to it, and the rest of the house should be furnished in the plainest and most durable manner. I submit a plan of such a building, with an estimate of its cost.

The Institution should appoint an overseer of work, who, with his family, should reside in this building, and be the head of the household. A man and his wife, without any other seeing persons, would suffice for the whole domestic duties of such a house; because blind persons enough could be found to render all the assistance that would be necessary, except, perhaps, in scrubbing floors.

No blind persons should be admitted to this family but capable and industrious workmen, and women of

the best character and deportment. The Institution should allow for each one a sum not exceeding the present cost of his board. This should be disbursed by the overseer for the household charges. At the end of each quarter, the expenses of the household should be assessed upon the members, and if they amounted to more than the sum so allowed, the excess should be deducted out of the wages of the workmen. They should have a voice about the kind of board to be provided, so that, if they chose to live frugally, they could do so, and if any thing were saved, it would be for their benefit. As all the domestic work would be done by blind persons, and each one would be pecuniarily interested in the economy or the waste, the household would be managed with great thrift. Persons who are surprised to find that the blind can do so many things about a house would be astonished, I doubt not, by seeing how many more things they would do, and do well, in a house of their own.

The same principle should be observed in the management of the work. The shop and the fixtures, with the machinery, should be furnished by the Institution. Experience having shown that the annual loss need not be over three hundred dollars, the Institution should pay this sum the first year. Then the stock and the materials of all kinds, the shop-rent in the city, and all the immediate expenses, should be paid by the workmen themselves, and the profit or loss at the end of the year fall to them. The tariff of prices for different kinds of work might remain as it is now, and each man be credited with the amount of work that he does. But instead of receiving, as he now does, the full amount of his wages



in money every month, he should receive only a small sum in cash, just enough for his pressing needs, the balance being placed to his credit. At the end of the year, if there should be a gain of two or three hundred dollars, each workman would receive his wages in full, and his share of the profits besides; but if there should have been a loss, his proportion of it would be taken out of his wages. Here would be a sort of joint-stock company, in which the profits would go to those who really do the work and earn them. Our workmen are as honest and industrious and faithful as any; they work, too, by piece-work; and we try to use as much economy as possible; nevertheless, there is no doubt, that, by an arrangement which should cause the profit or loss to inure directly to them, a saving of several hundred dollars yearly would be made. There would be less waste of stock, fewer jobs to be done over again, and fewer customers disappointed. We may talk about conscience, and the duty of doing a piece of work faithfully, and the wrong done to somebody by waste of stock; but still, after all, the motive of self-interest may be brought up to sustain the higher motives, as generals place troops to encourage the fighters, or shoot them if they turn. There will always be some who are careless or wasteful, and there cannot be so sure a way to correct them, as to make it for the interest of their fellow-workmen to do so. Any one who knows the blind will understand me, when I say, that no oversight or watching of a careless workman by seeing persons would be so effectual as that of his fellow blind workmen. Set a blind man to catch a blind man.



But there are other and higher considerations in favor of such a plan than that of saving money. The scanty wages is not the only evil in the lot of the irresponsible day-laborer. That very freedom from care and responsibility and risk of loss, which some consider as a compensation to the workman for the miserable inequality between him and his employer in the final profits, — this in itself is an evil, — an evil to the workman and an evil to his master. Care and forethought are as necessary to the growth and strength of the mind, as labor and exercise are to the growth and strength of the body; by the present method, the employer gets the whole of the former, and becomes all head and no body, while the workman gets the whole of the latter, and becomes all body and no head. How much better for the bodily health of the one and the mental growth of the other, if both could think and both could work! They can never, indeed, do this in the same degree, for Nature points out, by her mental inequalities, the distinction between leaders and followers; but they can do enough to show the dignity of labor and the true brotherhood of man. That employment is best for a man which brings into healthy action his bodily powers, his intellectual faculties, and his social feelings. What a wide difference in this respect between the husbandman, who must labor with his hands, and exercise forecast, discretion, and judgment, not only for the coming winter, but for coming years, and the maker of pin-heads, whose work is the same yesterday, to-day, and for ever, without judgment, and without care, save to make as many thousand pin-heads each day as will get sixpences enough to buy his daily bread!

The system of converting artisans, as well as soldiers, into unthinking, irresponsible machines, has been fully tried, and found wanting. The individual men and women, boys and girls, that crowd into a European factory, have as little thought and as little care about its management or its success, as the individual drops of water that fill the flume and move the wheel.

The laboring classes are as the feet of society ; they support and carry the whole social body ; but the system of irresponsible labor prevents their mental growth in a natural direction, as much as the iron shoe prevents the growth of a Chinese woman's foot. Now there must be growth somewhere ; the workman cannot grow in the region of his understanding, but he will grow in the region of his passions ; the feet of society are stunted and dwarfed in one direction, overgrown and monstrous in another, and the whole body totters. Those who complain of the intemperance, the improvidence, the dishonesty, and the *strikes* of workmen, should recollect that the very object of the system is to prevent them from thinking, and that without thought and care there can be no virtue.

In establishing a workshop for the blind, then, we should be careful to provide work for the mind as well as for the body, occupation for the thoughts as well as for the fingers. We should not put a pale man with a pen behind his ear into a small counting-room to do all the head-work and to take all the responsibility, but part of it should be thrown upon the workmen. Some of them have been educated in our school and trained in good families ; their minds have been filled with good principles and precepts, and we should, if possible, furnish them with opportunities for carrying them out into practice.

It is to be recollected, that we are to have to do with men and women, not boys and girls ; — the very persons whom we have always taught to be self-reliant and self-respectful, to seek independence, and to eschew alms. In opening for them a field of labor, let us give them the opportunity of practising these virtues. I am sure that there would be no unhappiness, no repining, in a community of blind persons, on account of what is supposed to be their great misfortune, if they could free themselves from the real and greater misfortune of dependence.

I would propose to limit, at first, the number of workmen and women who should be admitted to reside in the house to twenty-five, upon whom mainly should devolve the internal economy of the family and the workshop ; the Institution exercising a salutary control, through the overseer and his wife, who should be appointed and paid by it.

As for the workmen who did not live in the house, but merely came to it daily during the hours of work, I would have the Institution allow them weekly as much as it now costs to board them, and no more. The amount to be paid them, however, should depend upon the number of days' work they might do. If a man worked only half the week, he should be entitled to only half a week's allowance, except in case of sickness. They should receive a fair rate of wages for their work, and pay their board and all their expenses, themselves, without having any claim upon the Institution, beyond the allowance above named. This would incite them to industry ; but if they could not or would not earn their own livelihood, it would be a satisfactory proof that they were not proper objects of its care.

The plan which I have thus sketched for the future organization and management of the Work Department is the result of much thought and considerable experience with the blind. Something of the kind is certainly called for, both here and elsewhere in the country. It is true, that the original plan of the Institution did not contemplate such an establishment, but experience begins to show its necessity.

I would not have one tittle of the mental instruction now given to the young blind abated ; on the other hand, I would not encourage the conversion of the schools into asylums or homes for the feeble in body or in mind ; but I would have all the large institutions, and ours especially, make such arrangements as will protect the blind from unfair competition, and give them the same aid which other workmen have from combination of labor and capital.

Our great and instant object is the instruction of the blind, and the development of all their capacities ; but the end and aim is (as far as this world is concerned) their usefulness and happiness in society ; and if, in order to secure these for any considerable number of them, further and special provisions are necessary, surely we may make them.

Respectfully,

S. G. HOWE.

## APPENDIX C.

## GENERAL ABSTRACT OF THE

Dr. *Perkins Institution and Massachusetts Asylum for the*

For amount paid upon orders of Auditors of Accounts, viz:—

|                                                                                      |              |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------|
| “ Steward’s account, for Provisions, Fuel, Wages of Domestic, Stable, &c., . . . . . | \$ 7,305 16  |
| “ Salaries of Officers and Teachers from Oct. 1, 1846, to Dec. 31, 1847, . . . . .   | 5,102 12     |
| “ Repairs, Carpenter, Mason, and Iron Work, . . . . .                                | 745 87       |
| “ Printing Department, . . . . .                                                     | 604 42       |
| “ Music, Musical Instruments, and repairing same, . . . . .                          | 350 88       |
| “ Fire Insurance, . . . . .                                                          | 160 00       |
| “ Clothing for Pupils, . . . . .                                                     | 100 68       |
| “ Rent and Repairs of Office, . . . . .                                              | 80 66        |
| “ Expenses of Expeditions with Pupils, . . . . .                                     | 221 25       |
| “ Books, Stationery, and Apparatus, . . . . .                                        | 158 78       |
| “ Printing Annual Report, . . . . .                                                  | 172 22       |
| “ Postages and Advertising, . . . . .                                                | 68 88        |
| “ Miscellaneous Items, Leaders, Garden Expenses, Truckage, &c., . . . . .            | 588 73       |
|                                                                                      | <hr/>        |
|                                                                                      | 15,659 65    |
| “ Land at South Boston, . . . . .                                                    | 5,016 00     |
| “ Loans and Interest, . . . . .                                                      | 4,492 25     |
| “ Bank Stock, purchased, . . . . .                                                   | 9,862 75     |
| “ Boston Water Scrip, purchased, . . . . .                                           | 14,952 08    |
| Balance on hand to new account, . . . . .                                            | 1,688 03     |
|                                                                                      | <hr/>        |
|                                                                                      | \$ 51,670 76 |





*Boston, January 7th, 1848.*

The undersigned, a Committee appointed to examine the Accounts of the Treasurer of the Perkins Institution and Massachusetts Asylum for the Blind, for the year 1847, have attended to that duty, and hereby certify that they find the annexed accounts to be correctly cast, and properly vouched for, and the balance on hand proved to be \$1,688.03, say one thousand six hundred eighty-eight  $\frac{3}{100}$  dollars.

The Treasurer also exhibited to us evidence of the following property belonging to the Institution.

|                                               |           |              |
|-----------------------------------------------|-----------|--------------|
| Long Loan, 6 per cent. United States,         | . . . . . | \$ 10,000 00 |
| 9 Shares New England Bank,                    | . . . . . | 900 00       |
| 83 " State Bank,                              | . . . . . | 4,980 00     |
| 20 " Tremont Bank,                            | . . . . . | 1,975 00     |
| 46 " Columbian Bank,                          | . . . . . | 4,519 00     |
| 35 " Atlas Bank,                              | . . . . . | 3,368 75     |
| 25 " Concord Railroad,                        | . . . . . | 1,250 00     |
| 15 Certificates City of Boston Water Scrip,   | . . . . . | 14,952 08    |
| Deed of Land in South Boston, of J. K. Mills, | . . . . . | 765 64       |
| " " " " " Jonathan Preston,                   |           | 5,000 00     |
|                                               |           | <hr/>        |
|                                               |           | \$47,710 47  |
|                                               |           | <hr/>        |

Signed,

EDWARD CRUFT.  
SAMUEL HENSHAW.





SEVENTEENTH  
ANNUAL REPORT  
OF  
THE TRUSTEES  
OF THE  
PERKINS INSTITUTION  
AND  
MASSACHUSETTS  
ASYLUM FOR THE BLIND,  
TO THE  
CORPORATION.

---

CAMBRIDGE:  
METCALF AND COMPANY,  
PRINTERS TO THE UNIVERSITY.

1849.





SEVENTEENTH

ANNUAL REPORT

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METCALF AND COMPANY,

PRINTERS TO THE UNIVERSITY.

1849.



# REPORT.

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Perkins Institution and Massachusetts Asylum for the Blind.

*Boston, January 15, 1849.*

TO THE MEMBERS OF THE CORPORATION.

GENTLEMEN: — It again becomes our duty to lay before you an account of our stewardship during the year that has just closed.

The Institution has been conducted upon the same principles as in former years.

We have ourselves given personal attention, by means of committees, to its financial and general interests.

The Director has, as before, shaped the general course, and taken the immediate management and control of the establishment. Skilful and kind teachers have done the work of instruction satisfactorily. Industrious and faithful attendants have carried on the daily business of the house with diligence and regularity; while habits of temperance, exercise, and cleanliness have, with few exceptions, preserved the general health of the whole.

The retrospect, on the whole, then, is pleasant and satisfactory; and that reward has been reaped

which follows humble and earnest endeavours to learn the laws of God and to walk by them. Whatever success has been obtained is the result of forecast and labor; if any short-coming has been observed, it might perhaps have been avoided by greater wisdom and watchfulness. May the gain or the loss of the past, be it greater or less, be turned to good account for the future.

The number of inmates on the 1st of January, 1848, was ninety-four. During the year, twelve have been discharged, two have died, and fourteen have been admitted; so that the number at this time is ninety-four.

Most of the pupils in the school are supported by the several States whence they come, viz.: Maine, New Hampshire, Vermont, Massachusetts, Rhode Island, Connecticut, and South Carolina. Their friends furnish them with clothing, their education is provided for by the public. The readiness, and the alacrity even, with which the States respond to the call in behalf of the blind is one of the most pleasing signs of the times. Whenever the subject has been brought before the legislature of any State, and an appropriation asked for, it has been granted at once, without difficulty. Men of all parties and all sects unite cordially; and, forgetful even of habitual parsimony, they ask only how much is really needed, and give it with a blessing. A sum is appropriated and put at the disposition of the Governor, who gives warrants to the applicants, and pays to the Institution \$160 per annum for each one. Massachusetts pays an outright sum annually, which is so liberal, that the doors of the Institution can be



virtually opened to all applicants of proper age and character, without regard to the number. It is considered to be the duty of the State to give them an education, and they need no other certificate to entitle them to it than that of their infirmity and their need.

This is as it should be. It puts all upon an equal footing. It abolishes the odious distinction between paying scholars and charity scholars ; — a classification which almost necessarily leads to invidious distinctions in consideration and treatment. The consciousness of being a burden upon others, or an object of charity, should never be added to the grievous calamity of the sufferer's blindness. The appeal in his behalf should be to justice, and not to mere charity ; for it is an admitted truth with us, that *all* children have the right to an education at the hands of the State, and accordingly, schools adapted to their condition and wants are everywhere provided. But here is a whole class, who, by reason of blindness, cannot enter common schools or be profited by common means of instruction. Shall they be shut out from a share in the public bounty because a heavy calamity is weighing them down ? Surely not. If the State cannot teach them in common schools, let her provide special schools, and give them special instruction, without calling them charity scholars, any more than others. This is virtually the policy of Massachusetts, who, like a kind parent, provides schools and instruction for *all* children, even the blind, and the deaf mutes.

It used to be the case, even in our own Institution, that, if the parents of the pupil were not abso-

lutely poor, they were required to pay one hundred and sixty dollars a year for his instruction; but our poverty, and not our will, consented to our insisting upon this condition. Now, any one who asks for a free admission of his child receives it. He must be eminently a rich man who would meet with a refusal; nor could even he buy for his child any favors or advantages which the son of a pauper could not have by simply deserving them. When a case occurs where it is proper for a parent to defray the expenses of his son's education, it is better, perhaps, that he should be made to do it indirectly, by contributing in some way to the general funds, rather than in payment of a bill for tuition.

It is commonly said that the blind come from among the poor; and if by poor is meant those who are not very rich, it is true; for, in this country, the very rich are very rare. But it is not true that all, or even a very large proportion, of our pupils are the children of paupers. Many are the children of thriving mechanics and substantial farmers, who could very well afford to board and clothe them, and send them to a common school near home, but who cannot afford to pay one hundred and sixty dollars in cash yearly for the education of one child.

It is to be hoped that the liberal policy of Massachusetts will soon be imitated everywhere. Each State should, as far as may be, put blind children upon a level with other children in regard to the facilities for obtaining instruction, and do it, too, in such a way as not to wound their self-esteem by calling them charity scholars. Indeed, every scholar in a public school is, in a certain sense, a charity

scholar ; for no man, be his school-tax ever so high, pays back to society a tithe even of the cost of his child's instruction, because that is the result of a vast outlay of capital, and an immense accumulation of experience, through generations and ages of the past. The difference between what his son receives from the public bounty and what the blind son of his neighbour receives is only a difference of more or less ; and why should the name of *charity scholar* be thrown solely upon the latter, and the burden of his infirmity be thus made greater ?

The cost of instructing the blind, involving as it does the necessity of an establishment into which they can be gathered and provided for, is necessarily great ; but this is not the real difficulty in the way of setting up such institutions wherever needed, for ten times greater cost is borne by society without a murmur for the support of establishments of a different character, and which are not demanded by Christian and humane considerations, as is the instruction of the blind. Indeed, the means of support for all worthy institutions of beneficence will not be long wanting when people come to look upon it as the object and the duty of government to bless rather than to destroy. If the vast revenues of nations were wisely applied upon the principles of love and good-will to men, not only would all worthy institutions of beneficence be generously supported, but a frequent surplus revenue would be found for distribution.

There is sometimes danger that charitable establishments may foster and increase the very evil they were meant to lessen or to solace. But there is lit-

the fear of such results in the case of our Institution. The philosopher of old, who is fabled to have put out his eyes in order the better to think, will find no imitators in modern days ; nor will the example of the orator, who shut himself up in a cellar to pursue his studies, lead any who have eyes into schools for the blind. No school for the blind can ever become so good, that a parent will put out his child's eyes to qualify him to enter it ; no means of instruction through the sense of touch can become so perfect as to persuade people to forego the use of sight, even for a season. When all has been done that man can do, when love has exhausted its consolations, and art its contrivances, and wealth its power, to make the lot of the blind a happy one, still it never will be coveted by those who can see.

We refer the Board to the Report of the Director for a detailed account of the events of the year, and of the actual condition of the several departments. Especially would we recommend to its attention his remarks upon the necessity of increasing the facilities for giving employment to those of the blind who need it after their course of instruction is finished ; and likewise upon the great desirableness of continuing the work of printing.

It is found by experience that a class of sufferers present themselves and ask earnestly for help, and solace, and work, for whose case the Institution was not originally intended, but who are totally unprovided elsewhere, and whose appeal is so touching as to be irresistible ; — we mean those who are suddenly struck blind in early manhood by accident or by disease. We think that the proportional

number of those made blind by accident has increased of late years. Nature has so safely lodged the eye in a bony bed, and curiously fenced it round with sensitive guards, that it is safe from all the common injuries to which the body is exposed. But some of the modern inventions in mechanical arts expose the eyes of a workman to as great danger as any part of his body. Such, for instance, is the contrivance of blasting rocks with gunpowder, which is becoming very common with us. It is not a rare occurrence that a young, healthy, and bright-eyed man is, in an instant, blinded for life. The condition of such persons is more deplorable than that of those born blind, who know not what darkness is, because they never knew what light is. But to the man who has lived in an atmosphere of light, whose existence has been, as it were, enlarged and multiplied by the vast range of visible objects which the sense of sight seems to give him for his own, to incorporate, as it were, with his very being, until light and life become one and the same, — to him there is something real, sensible, and terrible in the darkness which suddenly covers him like a pall when his eyes are blasted. He is at first like one buried alive. All his thoughts, all his efforts, all his prayers are for deliverance from this thick gloom, — for some means of struggling out of it and back into light again. He knew the world mainly by its visible beauties, his wife by her loving looks, his children by their rosy cheeks, his friends by their smiling faces; but these and all other things are to him suddenly eclipsed, and friends, children, wife, the world, are all lost, as it seems, for ever.

Hope, that cannot be killed outright, at first whis-



pers, that, by some miraculous recovery of sight, all these lost treasures may yet be restored to him ; and though the word of promise is broken to the ear, he finds it is kept to the hope, that these things are really restored to him, though in a way which he did not expect, and that his intellectual and social relations with the world and with the objects of his affections may be maintained in all their intimacy and strength in spite of blindness. As the needle points to the pole by night as well as by day, so his love for relatives and friends still draws him to them through the darkness that hides them from his sight. Little by little he becomes resigned ; he even recovers his cheerfulness, and his interest in life is reawakened ; but soon his sky is clouded again by the discovery of his helplessness and his dependence. The interest and the sympathy of others, so warmly excited at first by his terrible misfortune, gradually grow less, and, if he has not parents to support him, he begins to be considered as a burden. He has then before him the dreary prospect of a life of dependence upon relatives and friends, to be dragged on until they are wearied of well-doing, or are dead ; and beyond that lies the cheerless scene of an old age and a death-bed in the alms-house. Besides this, the rust of idleness soon begins to eat into his soul. He finds that it is not life merely to be alive and unemployed, and begins to pine for an occupation as much as he ever pined for recovery of his sight. He is not young enough to enter a school for the blind, and go through a course of study with the boys, but he is not too old to learn a trade and earn his own livelihood.

It is for the relief of such cases as the one thus described that further provision is necessary; and we recommend to the Board the suggestions of the Director respecting it.

The Report of the Treasurer, which is herewith submitted, will show that the sum set down for extraordinary expenses is uncommonly large. This is to be accounted for by the fact that the question so long pending about removing the establishment from South Boston has been virtually decided in the negative. It seemed best, upon the whole, to abandon the thought of a removal, for the present at least; and therefore several costly alterations and repairs about the grounds and buildings have been undertaken, which would otherwise have been foregone.

The principal of these is the lowering of the grade of the play-ground, rebuilding the banks in front of the building, and erecting a substantial iron fence. These expenses have been rendered necessary by the alterations made by the city authorities in the grade of the street and by the excavation of the hill; for without them our building would have been not only inaccessible, but hardly safe. Justice and equity would seem to require that the heavy tax for these expenses should not be thrown upon the treasury of the blind, and we hope it may be found that the law will accord with equity, and that a claim for damages will be sustained.

The work upon the grounds is not yet finished, nor can it be until the slow and fitful process of levelling the streets shall be completed by the city authorities. When that is done, and a few further repairs are made upon the building, nothing will be wanting to render the establishment complete, as far

as its material wants are concerned, except a large and commodious workshop, entirely separated from the main building. That should be undertaken as soon as the state of the funds will allow it.

The desirableness, and the necessity even, of considering a workshop, furnishing employment to former pupils, as a permanent, though distinct, department of the Institution, of which we have been long convinced, is becoming generally recognized. The excellent Institution in New York, which has long suffered the same inconvenience that we have of want of proper room and appliances for a work department, has already taken measures for erecting a stone building upon a large scale, at a cost of twenty thousand dollars. We think we can obtain all the necessary accommodations for a much less sum.

The alterations and improvements above referred to have made a considerable inroad upon our funds, and if the erection of a workshop should be undertaken immediately, it would make a greater one; but we cannot hesitate about the propriety of the expenditure. The usefulness and the permanence of the Institution do not depend upon hoarding money, but upon a liberal, though prudent and wise, expenditure of it in such a manner as to promote the best interest of the blind.

It seems doubtful whether charitable institutions should be raised above the necessity of a reliance upon public favor by the possession of vast funds, the income of which suffices fully for their support. We wish our treasury to be, not like a full cistern, but like a living spring, fed by the hidden, but never-failing, sources of charity, which abound in the great bosom of humanity as the waters abound in the

bosom of the earth. We are content to be obliged to deserve a continuance of the bounty of the State and the munificence of individuals, by a liberal, though prudent, appropriation of what is given. We have heretofore received freely, and as freely given. Sometimes, indeed, the cruse seemed getting nearly empty, when it has ever been filled again by means more miraculous than that which filled the widow's of old; for that ceased with her life, while the means by which God fills the cruse of charity operate through all time, moving the hearts of good men to give freely of their substance to those who need. The community which has given to our Institution such friends as Perkins, and Oliver, and Todd, and Brooks, and Rotch, and many others, has not exhausted itself of goodness, and will ever supply, we doubt not, the needs of the blind.

The various inventories of property, which we are required by law to render annually, are herewith submitted.

We would invite the Board to visit the establishment in all its parts, and to make a thorough examination of it.

|                       |                                          |
|-----------------------|------------------------------------------|
| STEPHEN FAIRBANKS,    | } Trustees in<br>behalf of<br>the State. |
| HORACE MANN,          |                                          |
| SAMUEL P. LOUD,       |                                          |
| ROBERT RANTOUL, SEN., |                                          |

|                         |                                                   |
|-------------------------|---------------------------------------------------|
| THOMAS G. CARY,         | } Trustees<br>in behalf<br>of the<br>Corporation. |
| THEOPHILUS P. CHANDLER, |                                                   |
| J. J. DIXWELL,          |                                                   |
| JOHN D. FISHER,         |                                                   |
| SAMUEL MAY,             |                                                   |
| BENJAMIN LORING,        |                                                   |
| GEORGE R. RUSSELL,      |                                                   |
| CHARLES SUMNER,         |                                                   |

S. G. HOWE, *Secretary of the Board.*

## APPENDIX A.

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### EXTRACTS FROM THE DIRECTOR'S REPORT UPON THE WORK DEPARTMENT.

TO THE TRUSTEES:—

GENTLEMEN,—I have the honor to submit the following Report of the condition of the Work Department for the past year.

The great inconveniences and disadvantages arising from the want of sufficient room and of commodious arrangement in the workshop have, as heretofore, been seriously felt. I am sorry to say, moreover, that the workmen and women have not had such accommodations for their board and lodging, and such advantages for their social nature, as we all desire they should have. With these drawbacks, the department has, on the whole, been prosperous.

Twenty-eight men and women, who would otherwise have had great difficulty in finding any employment, and perhaps wasted the year in idleness, have been provided with work, and have spent the time industriously, profitably, and happily.

It will be remembered that the blind who are thus employed are, for the most part, adult persons



who have been pupils in the school at the Institution. They now have no connection with the school, and give their whole time to their various trades.

The plan upon which the department is conducted, and the general results for the past year, are as follows:—

The Institution owns the capital, provides board and lodging for most of the workmen, and has the supervision and direction.

All the expenses, for stock, the rent of the shop in the city, the salaries of the master-workman, clerk, salesman, and for everything connected immediately with the department, are paid out of the proceeds of the sales. No money has been drawn from the general treasury, or paid into it, on account of the department.

The workmen are masters of their own time and actions, as much as is the case in common workshops. The conditions of their engagement are, that they maintain a good moral deportment, and obey the general rules of the house with regard to the hours of rising, working, going to bed, and the like. They must work regularly and steadily while they are employed, and obey the rules of the shop. They have no claim to permanence of employment, and may be dismissed at any time, whenever the work fails, or when their conduct is unsatisfactory.

They receive their board and lodging; and their wages are graduated by a scale of prices, so that each one working by piece-work is paid according to his real earnings. Besides this, they receive one third of the net proceeds of the year's work over

and above the actual expenses of the department, — the cost of their board, however, not included. This third of the proceeds is divided among them in proportion to the amount of wages earned by each one during the whole year; so that he who has worked industriously, and earned one hundred dollars in wages, receives twice as much as one who has earned only fifty dollars.

Another third of the profits is paid to one of their number who acts as agent and salesman, and has the responsibility of the management of the shop: this is in addition to a small salary paid him.

The other third is reserved as a fund for paying the interest on the capital invested.

By this arrangement the agent and each workman become in a manner partners in the concern, and have a direct interest in its general success. They have not only a personal motive for promoting industry and economy, but a right to protest against any waste of time or stock by any of their number, and to complain if his work is done in a slovenly and unfaithful manner, or if his character and deportment are unworthy; for they know that such a fellow-workman is not only doing harm to the craft, but lessening their own gains.

The sum to be divided the last year was small indeed, being only three hundred and sixty-three dollars, and eighty-seven cents; but still it was enough to show the operation of the principle, and prove it to be good. The more the sum to be divided can be increased, and the greater proportion each one shall receive, the more will its good effects be felt.

There have been several extra expenses arising from the removal of the shop, and other causes which have increased the expenses, but which will not occur again.

On the whole, there has been a gain upon the last year, as there was in it upon the former years ; and though the department falls short of paying its expenses by as much as the amount of the board of the men, still it may be considered to have been successful as far as was contemplated.

We may expect very soon to increase the profits and lessen the expenses so much, that we may make a small advance upon the wages paid to the men, and then require them to pay for their own board. Indeed, there are several who could at the present moment pay for their own board, and have thirty or forty dollars to pay for their clothing. I do not propose any change now in the terms upon which those men are employed, for various reasons ; but it must be made soon.

On the whole, the future success of the department may be considered so certain, that there should not, it seems to me, be any hesitation about erecting a separate building for it, and putting it upon such a footing as will accommodate a large number of workmen.

The years which have been spent in cautiously trying this experiment have not been lost, and we can now proceed to form an establishment for the employment of adult blind persons, upon a better system than we could have done without the experience thus gained. There is reason, too, to suppose that necessary aid can be obtained either from

the State or from benevolent individuals, and I trust that no time will be lost in laying the foundations of the establishment broad enough to meet the wants of all the blind of New England. The lowest calculation gives one hundred to one hundred and fifty, as the number which will be furnished by the present population. The first thing is to fix upon the general system upon which the establishment is to be managed. This should have the most careful attention. We should not consider appearances, and impressions upon the public eye, nor economy even, as of the greatest importance, but should look to the means of promoting the best good and happiness of the blind.

That good and that happiness may be increased or lessened, during generations to come, by the measures we adopt now. We should aim also to make the establishment as simple as possible, — a self-regulating machine, or as near to one as may be. The blind should not only be left to do as much for themselves, and by themselves, as is possible, but they should be encouraged and urged to do so. We may be sure of one thing, — that, however much an institution may do for blind *children* by governing and directing them, it can never make them *men* by so doing; that can be done only by themselves. Leading-strings may help children, — they only cripple men and women.

The most important feature of the system is the mode in which the inmates shall be boarded and lodged. Shall they be received into one great house, and boarded and lodged there by the Institution, and the cost, wholly or in part, sub-

tracted from their wages? or shall the Institution merely provide a workshop, tools, stock, and a proper superintendent, and pay the workmen the highest wages that can be afforded, and let them provide themselves with board and lodging, and take care of themselves entirely when not employed in work hours? The establishments for the blind in Europe are, for the most part, conducted on the first method; and the one now in process of erection, as an appendage to the excellent institution in New York, is planned with the view of boarding and lodging the workmen and women in the same building in which they work. It seems to me, however, as clear as anything can from *a priori* reasoning, that this is a fundamental error; and my conclusion seems confirmed by the condition of the European asylums, and still more by the experience gained in our own establishment. There will be very serious, if not insuperable, difficulties in the execution of such a plan, unless the number of persons is very limited, — say twenty-five. If it is extended to one hundred, or one hundred and fifty, the difficulties and the evils will be manifold and manifest.

Our work department has been in operation several years upon this system, and it has succeeded in producing some most gratifying results; but it has done so in spite of the great and manifold disadvantages of the system. These disadvantages and evils would all be increased with an increase of numbers. I think this can be shown by a consideration of the principles upon which such establishments should be regulated, and of some of



the rules which must be adopted for their government.

There must be a separation of the sexes. Surely, little need be said to prove this. In view of the present condition of society, and in view of the various objections to intermarriage among blind persons, it seems to be an imperative necessity. I am aware that there is a difference of opinion among intelligent managers of similar public establishments with respect to the necessity of a separation of the sexes. Waiving, however, all argument respecting the best mode of preserving a healthy state of feeling among the inmates, whether by entire separation or moderate indulgence in each other's society, I maintain, that, in the case of the blind, and of all those who have a marked hereditary tendency to a physical infirmity, there is a stern moral duty to use every precaution against a perpetuation of such tendency through successive generations. Marriage in cases where one of the parties has such hereditary predisposition is generally unwise, often wrong: intermarriage between two persons so predisposed is always wrong, very wrong. It appears to me that this consideration should decide the matter, and lead to measures which will discourage familiar acquaintance even between blind persons of different sexes employed in the same establishment. This is a most unpopular doctrine to preach; it is an odious one to enforce in practice; but no one fully impressed with respect for the immutable will of God, as manifested in his natural laws, can hesitate between incurring the odium and doing the wrong.

The separation of the sexes, then, will be necessary in such an establishment; but it cannot be kept up between persons inhabiting the same dwelling without rules and regulations most strictly enforced, and without a watchfulness so close and constant as to become hateful. The very means used to prevent communication will make it the more coveted. The restraint necessarily imposed, with a view to the weak or the evil-disposed, will be likely to grieve or to vex those who could and would govern themselves. They are adults; they have perhaps been in the enjoyment of all their senses, and of entire personal independence, for years before their calamity befell them; many of them may be persons of high moral character and worth. Nevertheless, all must be treated alike, and submit to the same rules and regulations, which would soon become irksome and disagreeable.

The most effectual and the least irksome way of keeping up the separation of the sexes is that used in the Edinburgh Asylum, where they have two separate buildings, unconnected even by common grounds.

But suppose the attempt to keep up entire separation is successful, then there will be fifty women living by themselves in one family, or rather community, and from fifty to one hundred men living by themselves in another community; and of course we shall have all the evils which necessarily attend and follow so unnatural a condition of things. These evils are inevitable and irremediable. They need not be pointed out. They are seen not only in soldiers and sailors, in monks and in nuns, but

in every community of adult persons of one sex. Nature abhors such a state of things as much as she abhors a vacuum.

But all the considerations which forbid the formation of such a community of common people, with all their senses, may be urged even more strongly in the case of the blind. This will be seen, if we reflect a little upon the subject. If it is against nature to collect together adult persons of one sex into a community, still more so would it be to collect persons distinguished by a peculiar infirmity, who are always found pretty equally distributed over the country, and cause them to pass their lives together. Blindness, be it remembered, is an unnatural condition. ~~Hence~~ it is <sup>true</sup> that a certain number of blind persons is found in every community, and in every generation; and the proportion to the whole population is so uniform, in like circumstances and climates, as to seem to show that blindness is the necessary condition of a certain number of the children of the great human family. But this cannot be so. Our instincts revolt at the thought as irreligious, and reason, coming to the aid of our piety, points out to us that blindness is merely one of those manifold infirmities which are the consequences and the signs of the low and imperfect physical condition even of the healthiest community in the world. Nay, these infirmities are not only signs that the most civilized and the best physically developed people are still far below the highest attainable standard of health and vigor, but they are friendly warnings, deterring from further sin, and pointing to improvement.

It is argued by some, that, since there have ever been so many born blind of perfectly healthy parents, and so many become blind in the ordinary course of disease, therefore blindness is a necessary condition of the human family. But, in the first place, both these statements, though so generally admitted, even by persons familiar with the blind, are mere assumptions, unsupported by proof; and, in the second place, if they were true, and if such always has been the physical imperfection of the race, it does not follow that it must always remain so.

When an infant is born with any infirmity, deformity, or imperfection, nay, when it is weak and puny, it shows that the parents, one or both, inherited an unsound constitution, or have in some way impaired their health, and transmitted the legacy to their offspring. It is possible that a child may be born blind in consequence of some injury done to a perfectly healthy mother during gestation; but it is more likely that in every case one of the parents was infirm, or in an abnormal state of health; or that there lurked in the constitution an inherited tendency and liability to physical infirmities; so that disease and infirmity would follow upon causes too slight to affect healthy persons. I have so often found that even intelligent parents of blind children were ignorant of the existence of these constitutional and inherited tendencies in their own persons, though obvious to the physiologist, that I have ceased to put confidence in the common assertion, that there is no assignable cause for the child's blindness. When a child is

born blind, it is, in some way or other, the fault of his parents or progenitors; and though they may have erred in ignorance, the will of God is made manifest by the result,—the child is blind that the sin may be avoided, and no other blind children be begotten.

The same remarks may be made of those who become blind by disease. Almost all of them do so, manifestly, because their eyes were not so constituted originally as to have the usual and normal vigor to resist disease. To use a common figure, the disease falls upon the eyes as the weakest point. They become blind in consequence of a cold, or an inflammation, or scarlet fever, when more healthy and vigorous persons would have escaped scathless.

Even in the case of persons who become blind by accident, it is remarkable how many will be found, upon close examination, to have some hereditary taint of scrofula, or some marked predisposition to disease derived from their ancestors, or to have impaired their own health by imprudence, so that they are made blind by injuries which do not so affect others.

One man may have his eye so torn and lacerated by a wound, that the humors even may escape, and the ball seem to collapse, and the sight to be destroyed; nevertheless, by a vigorous effort of the system, the wound heals kindly, fresh humors are deposited, the ball is filled out with its transparent liquids, all the parts reassume their places, the functions are reëstablished, and, in a few days, the man sees as well as ever.



Another man may receive a much lighter injury in the eye, — a slight wound by the twig of a tree, or a blow from a buzzing insect, — when, straightway, inflammation and disease follow, the transparent coats thicken, become opaque, and the sight of one eye is destroyed for ever. Very often the other eye suffers from “sympathy,” as it is said, and the sight is injured or lost in that one, in consequence of the inflammation in the first. Or, if the remaining eye escape for the time, it is peculiarly liable to become diseased afterwards; and when the patient loses his sight, then you have the common complaint, “O, but for that unfortunate blow of a chip, or but for that powder or poultice prescribed by an ignorant doctor, I should not have been blind.”

When we hear of persons becoming blind from an apparently insufficient cause, we may conclude, — as in the case of those marvellous accounts of persons dying from the sting of an insect, or the scratch of a pin, or other trifling injury, — that the real marvel is how the blindness or death was avoided so long.

Comparatively few persons are born blind, but they are born to become blind; their eye-sight is lost, sometimes within a few weeks after birth, sometimes by disease or slight accident in youth, or it is weakened or extinguished long before the period of life when it decays in other men.

We must not, then, look upon the existence of blindness, deafness, and other infirmities, in every community and every generation, as the necessary and normal state of things, but as a consequence of a low condition of the physical man, — a con-

sequence which can be avoided in the future by raising the standard of health and vigor, and by that means alone.

It is only by a license of speech that we say the blind, the deaf, the infirm, the insane, and the like classes, are so many burdens thrown upon society by the mysterious providence of God; and only by a more unwarrantable license that we say He draws out the virtues and charities of some by the infliction of infirmity and suffering upon others. Such infirmities exist, not directly as a consequence of God's laws, but as a consequence of the violation of his laws. In this sense, it may be said of societies, as of individuals, They have all gone out of the way; there are none that do not sin. That they have gone out of *the* way shows that there is another way, and a right way; and sickness, infirmities, sufferings, and sorrows will drive them back into it, and, having thus ended their mission, will themselves die and disappear.

As we can suppose that an individual who inherits a sound and vigorous constitution, and ever lives temperately, may pass through a long life without an ache, or pain, or sickness of any kind, and gently cease to live without tasting the bitterness of death, — so we may conceive of a community existing for ages without having to endure pain, as we do, from the sight of whole classes of the suffering and the infirm, and to bear the burden of their support. That time, however, is far off; we have the infirm with us, and we must make provision for them.

These rather rambling remarks may seem un-

profitable, because, even though they prove that blindness is not a necessary and permanent condition of a certain proportion of the members of society, but only the sign of an imperfect social condition, still we must treat it as an actual and necessary evil. No truth, however, bearing upon the subject, can be unprofitable to us, especially in making arrangements for the future.

We must consider blindness, then, not as the normal and permanent condition of a portion of our fellow-men, but as an abnormal and temporary one, and found our institutions with a view to this principle. Blindness, being unnatural, has its moral as well as physical disadvantages and evils, and we must be careful not to increase them by any regulations in the establishment we may form for the good of the blind. We may now bring these general remarks to bear upon the subject immediately under consideration, namely, whether the blind workmen and women in the new establishment should be boarded in the house and kept together as one community, or not. If it be admitted (and surely it cannot fail to be) that such communities of ordinary persons of one sex are objectionable in many respects, then, *a fortiori*, communities made up of persons having a common infirmity are still more objectionable. During the period of childhood and early youth, the advantages to be gained by teaching blind children in classes, the confidence and the hardihood which are acquired by natural emulation, the mutual instruction, and other considerations too common to dwell upon, — all these things outweigh the necessary evils at-

tendant upon large boarding-schools; but with men and women this is not so.

We find the blind scattered about in families here and there; nature does not group them together; a town or a community of blind persons could not exist and flourish except by the support, direct or indirect, of general society. Nature has not adapted things in the external world with a view to a community of sightless persons. If we collect one or two hundred adult blind persons into one community, and board and lodge them in one house, we cause them to depart more from the condition indicated by nature than though we should merely supply them with work, and leave them to choose their own way of living in families of seeing persons.

If, indeed, we could put the work department into the form that is the most desirable and the least objectionable, we should dispense not only with the common boarding-house, but also with the common workshop, and have merely a *dépôt* and sales-room in the city for the reception and sale of the articles made by the blind at home, in their respective houses in the country. For obvious reasons, this cannot be accomplished entirely; but we should aim to approach as near to it as possible.

But we are dealing now only with the general considerations in favor of having the workmen board in families in the neighbourhood, and come to work in the shop, rather than have them board and lodge in the Institution. It should be a cardinal rule in the education of the blind, to keep

ever in view the fact that they are to become members of general society, and not of a society of blind persons. Such societies must have a tendency to increase in the individual members some of the evils and disadvantages growing out of their infirmity. The correctness of these general considerations seems to me to be maintained by the history and actual condition of the great asylums for the blind in Europe. There is the *Quinze Vingt*, or asylum for fifteen score of blind persons in Paris, and the asylum for about the same number at Naples, both of which are marked by the worst features of such establishments. The inmates are adults; they are not obliged to work, and no steady employment is provided. They associate but little with seeing persons; they have few relations and sympathies with the world; they form an unnatural community of infirm persons; and consequently a most undesirable and unlovely spirit pervades that community. All the moral disadvantages arising from blindness are increased and multiplied in their midst to a deplorable extent; and the moral atmosphere is most unpropitious to the growth of generous and manly virtue. The inmates are clanish to the last degree; they are suspicious, almost to defiance, of seeing persons; they are unamiable and unhappy. These very persons, if scattered about in the country, and living with different families, here one and there one, would strive to adapt themselves as nearly as possible to their condition as members of a society of seeing persons; they would daily receive and return marks of sympathy and love; each would in some degree compensate to



society for the want of power as a working member, by the lesson of resignation to suffering which he would teach; they would be, as we so often see the blind, distinguished for content and cheerfulness; in short, they would be blind persons striving to live among seeing men and as seeing men, whereas, now, they are blind men striving to become blinder.

It is true, that the habits of industry, which will of course be introduced into every establishment for the blind in this country, will tend to counteract many of the evils existing in the great asylums just referred to, but they would not prevent the growth of many of them.

I would appeal with the utmost confidence to the most intelligent young blind persons who have been brought up in public institutions, to say whether they would not feel great dislike, if not repugnance, to passing their lives in a community of blind persons. That they should do so is clear from a consideration of the psychological effects of blindness, which are to strengthen, not to lessen, the social affections. Cut off in so great a degree from communion with the external world, the blind are inclined to nestle more closely to the bosom of humanity. This is not, as is commonly supposed, from a sense of dependence merely, but mainly from the attempt of nature to develop herself strongly in some direction, in order to compensate for being suppressed in others. Possessing the great instrument of human intercourse, speech, they seek to commune by its means more closely with other hearts, — not only more closely than do

the deaf mutes, but more even than persons with their senses; their affections and their sympathies are all more deep and active; and therefore it is that their companionship should be with those whom it is most desirable for them to know and love.

But, besides the reasons derived from general considerations in favor of having the establishment merely provide the blind with work, and against providing them with board in common, there are others, which will readily occur when we come to look at the practical workings of the system.

It would simplify the whole matter very much to have merely a workshop. The great advantage which is claimed for the other method is, that the workmen may be boarded and lodged much more economically in one great establishment than they could be in separate boarding-houses. This is very true; but when we consider the complexity which it brings to the system, the difficulties of the administration, and the additional responsibility, the gain surely should not be considered worth the sacrifice which must be made of the comfort and the real interest of the blind.

The necessary rules and regulations of such an establishment, framed as they must be with a view to sustaining and controlling those members who cannot or will not be a law to themselves, must be very uncomfortable for those adults who can and would govern themselves. Moreover, such restraint is likely to be injurious to many of them, at least in a negative way, by preventing them from developing their character and strength through the exercise of self-government. Some of the workmen

will be youth who have just finished their course of instruction in school, and who need to have an opportunity, while the gristle of youth is hardening into the bone of manhood, of exercising that self-control and independence of action without which neither individuals nor communities attain true manliness.

The blind youth needs, as much as any other, to go out and buffet the world; to wrestle with difficulties, and to get strength and courage by long and varied exercise of his faculties. After learning his craft in the Institution, he needs to have his "*wander-year*." The experience of our school, limited as it is to fifteen years, teaches us a valuable lesson in this respect. Several young men, having finished their course of instruction, hung about the Institution, half leaning upon it for aid, — longing to go forth into the world, and yet fearing to do so, — venturing sometimes a few steps, like a toddling infant leaving its mother's knee, and then hurrying back; but when at last they were obliged to go, — when they struck out, as it were, boldly, to swim or sink alone, — then they succeeded. Such persons now tell us that they never felt true self-respect and self-reliance, until they had thus struggled; and that, while dependent upon others, they never considered themselves as of much worth in the world.

Now if we cannot give to all the blind the great privilege and advantage of conquering their own fortunes, at least let us, in forming an establishment for their aid, take care to give them as much liberty of action as can safely be done.

It is clear, that, by paying them in wages as much as or even a little more than it would cost to board and lodge them in common, we shall throw them more upon their own resources than by providing everything and thus saving them from care and responsibility.

It is a common error in the administration of public charitable institutions to treat the inmates like children, though they be adults, and to govern them too much. Such is the charm of exercise of irresponsible power, that even parents often utterly overlook the natural desire and right which children feel of gradually developing the individuality of character by more and more of self-guidance and control; they keep them in leading-strings, when they ought to go alone; they distort the character by stinting its growth in the natural direction. This same love of power often manifests itself very plainly in the administration of charitable institutions by boards of managers, male or female, especially in Europe. Jealous of their power, they do not depute it to those in the immediate management of the house; indeed, they rarely choose persons of much capacity, but generally cheap persons, who will simply enforce rules and regulations without the exercise of any thought or discretion.

The inmates, therefore, are sometimes the victims of a charitable tyranny, and are subjected to an absolute despotism of benevolence. They must do everything in a particular way, and according to the pleasure of their governors for the time being, who, with well-meant but ill-judged offi-

ciousness, wish to do even their thinking for them. They must lie down, get up, sit, stand, march, eat, and drink, by rule and measure. Even their devotions are of a prescribed form, and their communion with their Maker must be at times and in words gravely decided upon by the committee; they must say grace over viands, though they may happen to be unsavory to them, and return thanks for a "bountiful repast," though they may feel not half filled. The consequence of all this is apt to be a clannish spirit, a defiant disposition, restlessness and discontent. The seeds of charity do not bring forth the harvest of gratitude, and the fault is often attributed to the ungrateful hearts in which they were sown, whereas perhaps it is partly because they were not planted with discerning love.

I do most earnestly hope that we may not lessen the happiness of the blind in this way, but that, in enlarging our work department and putting it upon a permanent basis, we may adopt the system which will give them the greatest possible personal independence that is consistent with their true interests. This will be most conformable to the genius of our country and of our times.

We should, I think, require the workmen and women merely to maintain a good moral deportment, and to be subject to the discipline of the Institution only during the hours of work.

It may be objected to this, that some blind persons, who are too feeble in purpose and in mind for self-guidance, will be unable to hold their place in the establishment; but this will have the effect to raise the tone and character of the place.



Smaller objections may be made by some. The inmates may not always go to bed betimes; they may smoke tobacco; they may read improper books; they may go to sleep, or to walk in the fields, of a Sabbath afternoon, instead of going to church; they may, in various ways, fall into undesirable habits, which could be prevented by the strict discipline of an institution. But to argue from this the necessity of a discipline which deprives them of free moral agency would carry us far back into the bygone doctrines of despotism, — the real evils of which, whether upon a large scale or a small one, must ever be greater than the evils incident to freedom.

Another objection to the plan of boarding and lodging the inmates in common, and forming an institution which shall provide for them entirely, is the greater likelihood of its becoming, at last, a place of support for the aged or feeble, — a collection of drones rather than a hive of diligent workers, — of its degenerating into a mere asylum. At any rate, whatever severity of discipline may be used, that peculiar and indescribable spirit, which may be called the “asylum spirit,” and which is found in so many eleemosynary institutions, will be very likely to prevail under this system.

The principle doubtless will be, that each one must earn his own livelihood or go away; but the difficulties in enforcing this will be found almost insurmountable; — greater, certainly, than they would, if the establishment afforded work only for those who should board and take care of them-

selves. For instance, industrious and worthy men or women will, for a few years, earn enough to pay for board and clothing; they will find themselves in a comfortable home; they will gradually relinquish the hold they have upon their friends and relations, and the town to which they properly belong, and learn to think themselves established for life. At last, however, they become ill or feeble, and unable to pay their own way; they do not come up to the conditions of the establishment; but how can they be turned off? where shall they go? Their relations and friends have long ago learned to consider their obligations at an end; home they have none, except the almshouse; and it will be found so hard to send them there, that they will be allowed to remain and do what little they can, and thus the evil of having first one, and then more, idle or partially employed persons will creep in to lower the industrial tone of the establishment.

The system of offering work merely to those who can do it, and to them only so long as they do it well, would be less likely to cause the blind to relinquish their hold upon the affections, and their claims upon the support, of their relations. It is true that such persons ought to be provided for; but their place is not in a working hive, and their presence there must do harm.

Another cogent reason in favor of the plan of merely providing work, and paying wages therefor, is, that it will hold out greater inducements for the blind to remain at home, and do their work there, and send it to the Institution for sale.

This cannot be done with all kinds of work ; but it can with some, as braiding and sewing mats, seating chairs, and similar handicrafts, and every means should be held out to encourage occupations of this sort.

I have alluded to the disadvantages of many blind persons being congregated together in one house, and forming one family ; the same may be said, though with less force, against their being congregated in close neighbourhood. They should be distributed, as much as possible, through the community. Now if board is provided for them gratuitously, or even at the low rate at which it could be afforded by having a hundred board in common, many would resort to the Institution, who, if the alternative were to pay their board in private families or stay at home in the country with their relatives and work there, would prefer the latter. No words need be wasted to show how desirable this would be for the blind themselves. It is to be considered, also, that justice to the community, in which any establishment for the infirm is to be placed, demands that no more of them be gathered to it than is necessary for the purposes of humanity. If a hundred adult blind persons are to be induced to come from the country to Boston, and two hundred to New York, many of them will in time gain citizenship, and when they are old or disabled, a proportion of them will come upon the community for support. Boston will say, God speed your charity ; but she has a right to add, Let it be so ministered as to do the least possible injustice to this community.

It may seem a small matter to bring one or two hundred blind persons into a flourishing community of one or two hundred thousand people; but it is a question of justice, and as such is not affected by the magnitude of the interest at stake.

It would be easy to point out many disadvantages and discomforts to the blind, besides those already alluded to, which would arise if they lived in one house; but let a single one suffice. They would probably be made to lodge in one great dormitory, or at least they would be packed several in a room. This is usually the case in similar establishments; indeed, the very economy which dictates the boarding in common by day would suggest their being herded together in one room by night. Such a custom is bad enough for youth, but for adults it is abominable.

The considerations and reasons in favor of giving to every one of the workmen and workwomen a separate sleeping-room, be it ever so small, — a place which they may call their own, to which they can retire and feel that they are at home, are so obvious and so strong that they need not be alluded to. The cultivation of the sense of decency and self-respect is alone sufficient to decide the matter, to say nothing of the comfort and enjoyment which the blind would feel. They misunderstand or disregard the feelings of the blind who suppose that want of vision would prevent any injury to the finer part of their moral nature — their modesty and delicacy — by being obliged to lodge by scores in one room, and to undress and dress in each other's presence. If the deli-

cacy of persons habituated so to do is not shocked, it is only because they were never so fortunate as to have that beautiful sense developed; or, having had it developed, they were so unfortunate as to have it trampled out by exposure. It is a striking proof of the innate nature of this sense, that blind persons, properly trained, are as modest and delicate as those who see. It is one of the distinguishing features of humanity; let us respect it as much as may be.

Again, it will be found that the method I have advocated will act more effectually as a spur to industry than the opposite one, and for this reason, that it will be self-acting; while the efficiency of the other mode will depend upon the varying humor and vigilance of the superintendents. We have to deal with the blind, and we must take them as they are; and the facts learned during our long experience with the work department, upon this very system of boarding the workmen, are more valuable than any reasoning *a priori*. It is found that many will not work as diligently and successfully when they feel that they can lean upon the Institution for partial support, as when they find they cannot.

Many of the blind are not only of a feeble and scrofulous temperament, but they are lymphatic, and indisposed to active exertions. They need the spur of necessity. While boarding in the Institution, they know it will be hard to keep a strict reckoning with them; they feel sure that they will not be allowed to suffer; and they are apt to dawdle the time away, and think that their indispo-



sition to work is real inability to work. It is true, that, by a vigilant and careful administration of discipline, they could be made to work or to leave; but the advantage of the system I propose is, that it would act by itself, vigilantly and surely.

For these and for various other reasons, I would advise that the system shall be, merely to give the means of work and the highest wages that can be afforded, and to let the men and women provide their own board, in private houses or at home, and take care of themselves entirely. It may be necessary, at first, to pay them something over the actual profit; if so, let it be done in money, rather than in the way of board.

The inconvenience of coming to the workshop daily, and going home to their meals, would be more than counterbalanced by the great advantage of forcing them to take exercise in the open air. The advantages would be great. The whole system would be simplified, and its administration made much easier.

The moral evil of having a large community of infirm persons, of one sex, living without the wholesome influence of the social and family circle, would be obviated. They would be scattered about in private families; they would keep up social relations with *seeing* people; they would be still of the world. They would not consider the workshop as their home. They would be less likely to cut off their relations with friends and kindred. They would be thrown more completely upon their own exertions, and learn to go alone. Their love of independence would be gratified.

The spur of necessity would be self-acting. There would be little need of urging and coaxing to work. They would be less liable to fall into habits of laziness or idleness. They would be more easily got rid of, if they should. The establishment would be a working hive. If a man could not or would not earn enough to pay his board, he would be obliged to go home, and not wait for a dismissal. The establishment would not be resorted to, except by the honest and diligent. Its moral character would thus be elevated, and its efficiency thereby increased. For all these reasons, it would, in my opinion, be much more conducive to the best interests, and of course to the happiness, of the blind.

The other features of the system to be adopted are of less importance, and more easily settled. That part of our present system alluded to in the beginning of this Report should be preserved, by which a certain sum over and above the weekly earnings of each man shall be paid to him at the end of the year, and which shall be in proportion to the earnings of the shop, and to the amount of labor he has done. It would be well, perhaps, to pay the workmen only enough to suffice for the cost of their board and the supply of the most necessary wants, so that as large a sum as possible may remain for distribution. When this becomes, as it soon would, an important part of their income, the wise and prudent among them will perceive that it behooves them not only to be diligent and economical themselves, but to make all the others so likewise. They will perceive that

the amount to be divided depends upon the amount of work done, upon faithfulness to customers, and upon economy in the use of the stock and tools and everything belonging to the shop. Their interest will thus be enlisted on the side of those who direct the establishment, and they will bring a moral force to their aid greater than can be found elsewhere.

There are, in every school for the blind, a few persons, (as in all societies,) who, by greater wisdom and force of character, direct the current of feelings and opinions among the rest; and it is always necessary to have their coöperation for the ends of good government. Indeed, it would be most desirable to have the workmen interested not only in the success of the establishment, but also in its management. There are now in our workshop a few men of intelligence and high moral character, whose experience in the work makes their opinion on all practical matters very valuable. I should like to see such men in the relation of partners in the business, and having a voice in its management. How far it is possible to arrange the shop upon the principle of a joint-stock company can be known only by cautious trial. The single step we have taken towards it has proved thus far successful. That the moral effect of carrying the principle still farther would be excellent, there can hardly be a doubt; but as this subject was fully discussed in the last year's Report, it need not be dwelt upon now. I will only add, that it may seem just and expedient to modify somewhat the rule by which the

earnings of the shop are divided. The men now receive shares proportioned to the amount of their wages. The amount of wages, however, does not depend entirely upon the amount of time during which one is employed, nor even upon his diligence. A mattress-maker will easily earn twelve or fifteen dollars a month by working ten hours a day; but one employed in seating chairs cannot earn five, work he never so diligently. It is true that more skill is required for mattress-work, but not so much more as to make this difference in the pay. Besides, the mattress business being the most profitable, all would like to learn the trade, and to work at it. But this cannot be, for the amount of work would not suffice; and the other trades must be attended to.

I cannot help thinking that the plan of mutual risk and profit may be carried out to a great extent. But will such an establishment, providing for so many persons, support itself? If the answer to this question is to be drawn from the experience of the past, it would be, Nay; for, notwithstanding reports to the contrary, it may be taken for granted that in no establishment in the world do the blind fairly and fully support themselves. The sad truth, that, in all countries but our own, the truly laboring classes can only just keep ahead of the wants that are ever baying closely at their heels, shows that a class of blind persons, with ~~their~~ a heavy infirmity to bear, must be aided by others, or fall in the rear, a prey to want. Directly or indirectly, the blind in the working establishments of Europe do receive aid

from society, which other laborers do not. In one sense, however, the seeing laborers receive, indirectly, from society, assistance which they look upon as a right; while the assistance given to the blind, being more direct, is called charity. This aid, granted by society to common workmen, is the incalculable assistance derived from the capital of knowledge and experience, tools and machinery, to which each generation becomes a sort of residuary legatee of all the generations that have preceded it. When something like this capital shall be accumulated for the blind, they will work to greater advantage, and the aid they receive will not be called charity.

In this country, the experiment in our own Institution is the only one which has been tried on a sufficiently large scale, or for a sufficiently long time, to furnish any useful data.

The workshop has been in existence as a separate department about six years. The workmen have steadily improved, not only in skill, but in diligence; the amount of sales has constantly increased, from a few hundred dollars the first year to about thirteen thousand the last. The expenses have lessened and the profits have increased. During the last year, the number of workmen and women was twenty-eight. The aggregate of wages paid them in cash was two thousand and seventy-nine dollars and sixty-two cents; three of them received an aggregate of four hundred and nine dollars and twenty-eight cents, being upon an average one hundred and thirty-six dollars and forty-two cents each; so that, if they had been obliged to pay their board,



say eight dollars a month, they would have had thirty-six dollars each to furnish themselves with clothing. Four earned three hundred and seventy-nine dollars and forty-three cents, which would about pay their board, but leave nothing for clothing; while the rest earned only from thirty to sixty dollars apiece, and of course they could have done little or nothing by themselves.

It may be supposed that those of the first class ought to be required to pay their own board, since they earn enough to do it. This ought in justice so to be, and will be by and by; but there are good and sufficient reasons why it has not been so as yet. In the beginning of the enterprise, these men were like a generous horse in a dull team, dragging not only the load, but the sluggards along with it. The present success has been attained by promising certain returns, if a degree of diligence and resolution were put forth, which were *then* considered by the blind as impossible. It was in order to see if we could not make them do more than they were doing, or thought they could do, that high inducements were held out. They have made the effort, and succeeded. Two of these men, by working at a very hard and disagreeable kind of labor twelve or fourteen hours daily, have been earning sixteen dollars a month; others, twelve or thirteen. They have thus come to do more than they thought they could do. They have been brought to it by the prospect of high pay; it was the only way in which we could know, or they could know, how much they could do; and it would not be fair *at once* to reduce their wages

to the least sum that would support life. It is, however, only fair and right, and the blind will not object to it, that, having by these experiments ascertained what they can do, and established a sort of standard to measure the value of their work, the wages of each one should be graduated by it.

There is no doubt that the expenses of the department may be lessened, and the amount of labor and the profit upon it considerably increased, so that a few of the most expert workmen may really support themselves, and lay up a small sum besides; and that one half of the rest may be enabled to earn their board and clothing. But the others must have their wages eked out by assistance from some quarter or other.

Let us suppose, that, out of a hundred, twenty can pay their way and lay up a trifle; thirty can just pay for board and clothing; while fifty will fall short, some by a few cents, some by a dollar a week. We shall then have to provide for some source of income over and above the profit\* of the department, which can be added to the earnings of these fifty, so that they may be enabled to live. This should be done in such a way as least to wound their self-respect, — as to encourage rather than depress them. The aid of the public should come to the blind as silently and insensibly as the dew descends upon the grass, gladdening while it nourishes, and not weighing them down by a sense of obligation.

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\* When mention is made in this Report of the "profit" of the work department, it is meant, of course, that the board and lodging of the work-people are given in by the Institution: if these were to be reckoned, there would be no profit, but a considerable loss.

I would propose that a large and commodious workshop be built, the cost of which would be ten thousand dollars, besides the land, which could be given by the Institution. The cost of the building, it appears to me, should be paid by the State, since all parts of the State will be benefited by this provision for a class of persons many of whom would otherwise come upon the public for a support.

There should be, besides, a fund, the interest of which will be enough to pay the rent of a sales-room in the city, the salaries of a salesman, clerk, and overseer of work. All the rest of the expenses of the establishment should be charged to the workmen, and the profit should be divided among them in fair proportion. It should be paid out in the shape of wages for their work, to each according to his industry and his merits.

Aid should be given to them in this way, rather than in the shape of board and lodging, which seems to renew, with every meal, a sense of its source and of their obligation.

This subject is one really worth the attention of those who may be turning their thoughts to the best way of doing good with their surplus means, or of so disposing of their fortunes, when their stewardship ceases, as to make them bear fruits of beneficence through ages to come.

In the way thus pointed out, and at an expense of less than three thousand dollars, from one hundred to one hundred and fifty blind people might be kept industriously at work, and enabled to earn, wholly or in great part, their own livelihood. It

is difficult to imagine how a greater amount of real good can be done with the same means. It would be doing better even than to feed the hungry and clothe the naked,— as it would enable them to feed and clothe themselves. Beneficence, thus guided by wisdom, would have almost a miraculous effect. It would give to a little money the power of great riches ; it would so multiply twenty dollars as to make this sum suffice to feed, and clothe, and gladden, for a whole year, a man who, without it, would be sitting idly in his darkness, and eating the bitter bread of alms.

## TERMS OF ADMISSION.

---

YOUNG blind persons, of good moral character, can be admitted to the School by paying \$ 160 *per annum*. This sum covers all expenses, except for clothing; namely, board, washing, medicines, the use of books, musical instruments, &c. The pupils must furnish their own clothing, and pay their own fares to and from the Institution.

There is a vacation in the Spring, and another in the Autumn. The friends of the pupils can visit them whenever they choose.

Indigent blind persons, of suitable age and character, belonging to Massachusetts, can be admitted gratuitously by application to the Governor for a warrant.

The following is a good form, though any other will do : —

“ TO HIS EXCELLENCY THE GOVERNOR : —

“ SIR, — My son, (or daughter, or nephew, or niece, as the case may be,) named A. B., and aged \_\_\_\_\_, cannot be introduced into the common schools for want of sight. I am unable to pay for the tuition at the Perkins Institution and Massachusetts Asylum for the Blind, and I request that your Excellency will grant a warrant for free admission.

“ Very respectfully, \_\_\_\_\_.”

The application may be made by any relation or friend, if the parents are dead or absent.

It should be accompanied by a certificate from one or more of the Selectmen of the town, or Aldermen of the city, in this form : —

“ I hereby certify, that, in my opinion, Mr. \_\_\_\_\_ is not a wealthy person, and that he cannot afford to pay \$ 160 *per annum* for his child's instruction.

(Signed,) “ \_\_\_\_\_.”

There should also be a certificate, signed by some regular physician, in this form : —



"I certify, that, in my opinion, ——— has not sufficient vision to be taught in common schools; and that he is free from epilepsy, and from any contagious disease.

(Signed,) "—————."

These papers should be done up together, and directed to "The Secretary of State, State House, Boston, Mass."

An obligation will be required from some responsible person, that the pupil shall be removed without expense to the Institution, whenever it may be desirable to discharge him.

The usual period of tuition is from five to seven years.

Indigent blind persons residing in Maine, New Hampshire, Vermont, Connecticut, Rhode Island, and South Carolina, by applying as above to the "Commissioners for the Blind," care of the Secretary of State in the respective States, can obtain warrants of free admission.

For further particulars, address Dr. S. G. Howe, Director of the Institution for the Blind, Boston, Mass.

The relations or friends of the blind who may be sent to the Institution are requested to furnish information in answer to the following questions:—

1. What is the age of the applicant?
2. Where was he born?
3. Was he born blind?
4. If not born blind, at what age did he become so?
5. What is the supposed cause of the blindness?
6. Have there been any cases of blindness, or deafness, or insanity, in the family of the applicant, among his brothers and sisters, parents, grandparents, uncles, aunts, or cousins?
7. Were his parents or grandparents affected with scrofula, in any form; with consumption; humors, such as salt rheum; eruptions of any kind; or had they any peculiarity of bodily constitution whatever?
8. Were the parents or the grandparents of the applicant related to each other by blood? If so, in what degree?

## APPENDIX B.

## ABSTRACT FROM SHOP BOOKS,

INSTITUTION FOR THE BLIND, JAN. 1, 1849.

*Assets.*

|                                                                                                 |            |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------|
| Amount of Debts due from Individuals, good, . . . . .                                           | \$2,475 77 |
| “ “ Stock on hand, . . . . .                                                                    | 5,153 91   |
| “ “ Cash, . . . . .                                                                             | 60 15      |
| Balance of Debit of Profit and Loss Account, for the whole<br>period of the business, . . . . . | 1,157 41   |
|                                                                                                 | <hr/>      |
|                                                                                                 | \$8,847 24 |

*Liabilities.*

|                                                                                                                           |            |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------|
| Amount due to Institution, being the amount originally<br>advanced as a capital for conducting the<br>business, . . . . . | \$4,756 96 |
| “ “ “ Individuals, . . . . .                                                                                              | 4,090 28   |
|                                                                                                                           | <hr/>      |
|                                                                                                                           | \$8,847 24 |

|                                                           |             |
|-----------------------------------------------------------|-------------|
| The Debit of Profit and Loss Account, Jan. 1, 1848, was . | \$ 1,521 28 |
| “ “ “ “ “ Jan. 1, 1849, is .                              | 1,157 41    |
|                                                           | <hr/>       |

|                                                           |           |
|-----------------------------------------------------------|-----------|
| Gain . . . . .                                            | \$ 363 87 |
| which is the Balance of Profit and Loss Account for 1848. |           |

The amount paid to twenty-eight blind persons, in 1848, was \$2,079 62,  
as wages for their work.

## APPENDIX

## GENERAL ABSTRACT OF THE

Dr.      *Perkins Institution and Massachusetts Asylum for the*

For amount paid on orders of Auditors of Accounts, viz: —

|                                                                                                  |            |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------|
| Steward's account, for Provisions, Fuel, Wages of Domestics, Stable, &c., . . . . .              | \$6,702 71 |
| Salaries of Officers and Teachers, . . . . .                                                     | 5,010 79   |
| Repairs, Alterations and Improvements, Carpenters, Masons, Iron Work, Stone, Lumber, &c. . . . . | 5,418 40   |
| Printing Department, . . . . .                                                                   | 1,306 87   |
| Music, Musical Instruments, and repairing same, . . . . .                                        | 971 05     |
| Fire Insurance, . . . . .                                                                        | 154 08     |
| Clothing for Pupils, . . . . .                                                                   | 155 04     |
| Rent of Office, Repairs, and Expenses, . . . . .                                                 | 224 84     |
| Books, Stationery, and Globes and Apparatus, . . . . .                                           | 561 16     |
| Postages and Advertising, . . . . .                                                              | 77 58      |
| Miscellaneous Items, Leaders, Trees, Vines, and Garden Expenses, Truckage, &c., . . . . .        | 580 60     |
| Printing Annual Report, . . . . .                                                                | 161 31     |
| Amount paid for Land at South Boston, bought of H. J. How, . . . . .                             | 5,500      |
| Amount paid Loan to Union Bank, . . . . .                                                        | 1,000      |
| Balance on hand to new account, . . . . .                                                        | 85 97      |

---

\$27,910 40

---

## TREASURER'S REPORT FOR 1848.

*Blind in Account with* T. B. WALES, JR., *Treasurer.* Cr.

|                                                |                                |              |
|------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------|--------------|
| By Balance on hand, Jan. 1, 1848.              |                                | \$ 1,688 03  |
| " Amount received from State of Massachusetts, | \$ 9,000 00                    |              |
| " " " " " N. Hampshire,                        | 450 00                         |              |
| " " " " " Connecticut,                         | 478 80                         |              |
| " " " " " Vermont,                             | 476 40                         |              |
| " " " " " Rhode Island,                        | 1,095 87                       |              |
| " " " " " South Carolina,                      | 352 10                         |              |
| " " U. S. Stock, 6 per ct. Long Loan, sold,    | 10,225 00                      |              |
| " " Received for Interest on Stocks,           | 2,591 45                       |              |
| " " " for Books sold,                          | 16 25                          |              |
| " " " from Paying Pupils,                      | 442 00                         |              |
|                                                | <hr/>                          | 25,127 87    |
| " " " for Donation from Miss C. W.             |                                |              |
|                                                | Loring,                        | 50 00        |
| " " " for first payment of Legacy from         |                                |              |
|                                                | Miss Tufts,                    | 50 00        |
| " " " for Loan, borro'd Union Bank,            | 1,000                          |              |
|                                                | Less Interest, 1 month 3 days, | 5 50         |
|                                                | <hr/>                          | 994 50       |
|                                                |                                | <hr/>        |
|                                                |                                | \$ 27,910 40 |
|                                                |                                | <hr/>        |

*Errors excepted.*(Signed,) T. B. WALES, JR., *Treasurer.**Boston, Dec. 31, 1848.*

*Boston, January 5th, 1849.*

The undersigned, a Committee appointed to examine the Accounts of the Treasurer of the Perkins Institution and Massachusetts Asylum for the Blind for the year 1848, have attended to that duty, and hereby certify that they find the annexed account to be correctly cast and properly vouched for, and the balance to be \$85 97, say eighty-five  $\frac{97}{100}$  dollars.

The Treasurer also exhibited to us evidence of the following Property belonging to the Institution.

|    |                                                           |           |             |
|----|-----------------------------------------------------------|-----------|-------------|
| 9  | Shares in New England Bank,                               | . . . . . | \$ 900 00   |
| 83 | “ State Bank,                                             | . . . . . | 4,980 00    |
| 20 | “ Tremont Bank,                                           | . . . . . | 1,975 00    |
| 46 | “ Columbian Bank,                                         | . . . . . | 4,519 00    |
| 35 | “ Atlas Bank,                                             | . . . . . | 3,368 75    |
| 25 | “ Concord Railroad,                                       | . . . . . | 1,250 00    |
| 15 | Certificates City of Boston Water Scrip,                  | . . . . . | 14,952 08   |
|    | Deed of Land in South Boston, purchased 20th June, 1844,  |           | 765 64      |
|    | Deed of Land in South Boston, purchased of Jonathan Pres- |           |             |
|    | ton, 4th March, 1847,                                     | . . . . . | 5,000 00    |
|    | Deed of Land in South Boston, purchased of H. J. How,     |           |             |
|    | September, 1848,                                          | . . . . . | 5,500 00    |
|    |                                                           |           | <hr/>       |
|    |                                                           |           | \$43,210 47 |
|    |                                                           |           | <hr/>       |

(Signed,)

S. AUSTIN.

N. H. EMMONS.



# LIST OF BOOKS

PRINTED AT THE

PERKINS INSTITUTION AND MASSACHUSETTS  
ASYLUM FOR THE BLIND.

WITH PRICES.

|                                              | No. of<br>volumes. | Price per<br>volume. |
|----------------------------------------------|--------------------|----------------------|
| BIBLE, . . . . .                             | 6                  |                      |
| Lardner's Universal History, . . . . .       | 3                  | \$ 3 00              |
| Howe's Geography, . . . . .                  | 1                  | 2 00                 |
| " General Atlas, . . . . .                   | 1                  | 3 00                 |
| " Atlas of the United States, . . . . .      | 1                  | 2 00                 |
| " " of the Islands, . . . . .                | 1                  | 1 50                 |
| English Reader, First Part, . . . . .        | 1                  | 2 00                 |
| " " Second Part, . . . . .                   | 1                  | 2 00                 |
| Dairyman's Daughter, . . . . .               | 1                  | 1 00                 |
| The Harvey Boys, . . . . .                   | 1                  | 1 00                 |
| The Spelling Book, . . . . .                 | 1                  | 1 00                 |
| The Pilgrim's Progress, . . . . .            | 1                  | 2 50                 |
| Baxter's Call, . . . . .                     | 1                  | 1 50                 |
| English Grammar, . . . . .                   | 1                  | 1 00                 |
| Howe's Blind Child's First Book, . . . . .   | 1                  | 75                   |
| " " Second Book, . . . . .                   | 1                  | 75                   |
| Sixpenny Glass of Wine, . . . . .            | 1                  | 50                   |
| Life of Melancthon, . . . . .                | 1                  | 1 00                 |
| Book of Sacred Hymns, . . . . .              | 1                  | 1 00                 |
| Howe's Blind Child's Manual, . . . . .       | 1                  | 75                   |
| Constitution of the United States, . . . . . | 1                  | 75                   |
| Book of Diagrams, . . . . .                  | 1                  | 75                   |
| Viri Romæ, . . . . .                         | 1                  | 1 50                 |
| Peirce's Geometry, with Diagrams, . . . . .  | 1                  | 1 75                 |
| Political Class Book, . . . . .              | 1                  | 1 75                 |
| First Table of Logarithms, . . . . .         | 1                  | 1 00                 |
| Second " " . . . . .                         | 1                  | 1 75                 |
| Principles of Arithmetic, . . . . .          | 1                  | 1 00                 |
| Astronomical Dictionary, . . . . .           | 1                  | 1 50                 |
| Philosophy of Natural History, . . . . .     | 1                  | 2 75                 |
| Rudiments of Natural Philosophy, . . . . .   | 1                  | 2 00                 |
| Cyclopædia, . . . . .                        | 4                  | 3 00                 |
| The Book of Common Prayer, . . . . .         | 1                  |                      |
| Guide to Devotion, . . . . .                 | 1                  |                      |
| Total, . . . . .                             | 44                 |                      |

OFFICERS OF THE CORPORATION,  
FOR 1849.

---

PRESIDENT,  
RICHARD FLETCHER.

VICE-PRESIDENT,  
EDWARD BROOKS.

TREASURER,  
T. B. WALES, JR.

SECRETARY,  
SAMUEL G. HOWE.

TRUSTEES,  
THOMAS G. CARY,  
THEOPHILUS P. CHANDLER,  
J. J. DIXWELL,  
JOHN D. FISHER,  
BENJAMIN LORING,  
SAMUEL MAY,  
GEORGE R. RUSSELL,  
CHARLES SUMNER,

} *In behalf of the  
Corporation.*

The Board of Visitors, consisting of the Governor, Lieutenant-Governor, President of the Senate, Speaker of the House, &c., have appointed

STEPHEN FAIRBANKS,  
SAMUEL P. LOUD,  
HORACE MANN,  
ROBERT RANTOUL, SEN.,

} *Trustees in behalf of the State.*



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EDWARD BROOKS.

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T. B. WALES, JR.

SECRETARY,  
SAMUEL G. HOWE.

TRUSTEES,

|                                                                                                                                                             |                                            |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------|
| THOMAS G. CARY,<br>THEOPHILUS P. CHANDLER,<br>J. J. DIXWELL,<br>JOHN D. FISHER,<br>BENJAMIN LORING,<br>SAMUEL MAY,<br>GEORGE R. RUSSELL,<br>CHARLES SUMNER, | } <i>In behalf of the<br/>Corporation.</i> |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------|

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|                                                                                |                                           |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------|
| STEPHEN FAIRBANKS,<br>SAMUEL P. LOUD,<br>HORACE MANN,<br>ROBERT RANTOUL, SEN., | } <i>Trustees in behalf of the State.</i> |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------|

EIGHTEENTH

ANNUAL REPORT

OF

THE TRUSTEES

OF THE

PERKINS INSTITUTION

AND

MASSACHUSETTS

ASYLUM FOR THE BLIND,

TO THE

CORPORATION.

---

CAMBRIDGE:

METCALF AND COMPANY,

PRINTERS TO THE UNIVERSITY.

1850.





EIGHTEENTH

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ASYLUM FOR THE BLIND,

TO THE

CORPORATION.

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CAMBRIDGE:

METCALF AND COMPANY,

PRINTERS TO THE UNIVERSITY.

1850.



# REPORT.

---

Perkins Institution and Massachusetts Asylum for the Blind.

*Boston, January 1, 1850.*

TO THE MEMBERS OF THE CORPORATION.

GENTLEMEN: — We have the honor to lay before you a brief Report touching the condition and management of the Institution under our charge during the past year.

There is no important event to record, and no change to notice in the manner of conducting the establishment. The school has been silently, but steadily, preparing the youth of both sexes for usefulness and happiness in after life. The workshop has been furnishing profitable employment to those who have left the school, and undertaken to obtain their own livelihood.

The responsibility for the direction and immediate management of the whole has been left, as in former years, with the Director, Dr. S. G. Howe. His health, which had become so much impaired at the beginning of the year, as to make us apprehensive that he would relinquish his labors, has been measurably restored, and will, we trust, be soon firmly reëstablished.

In his various Reports to our Board may be found all the minute details respecting the condition of each department of the Institution.

The number of inmates on the first day of January, 1849, was ninety-four; of these, nine have been discharged, and two have died, while nineteen new ones have been admitted; so that the number connected with the Institution at this time is one hundred and two.

The health of the household has generally been very good. No cases of cholera occurred during the reign of the epidemic, though they were not infrequent in some of the public institutions in the neighbourhood.

We have, however, to regret the loss of the principal teacher, Mr. Seth Littlefield, who died of acute fever on the 19th of July. He was a young man of great merit and promise, much esteemed by all who knew him, and greatly beloved by all his pupils.

The last Annual Report set forth the necessity of providing a separate and suitable building for a workshop, for the better accommodation of those pupils who had finished their course of instruction in the school, and entered the work department, and also of such adult persons as become blind by disease or accident, and apply for admission to it. The number of these had been steadily increasing; the manufacture and the sale of articles had been increasing also, and the work could not be carried on in the main building without great inconvenience. The number of applicants, moreover, was greater than could be received.



The erection of such building being resolved upon, the aid of the Legislature was asked for, and granted. The sum of five thousand dollars was appropriated, upon condition that an equal sum should be applied to the same object by the Institution. The building is now near completion, and will be ready for occupation on the first day of April. The cost will be a little over \$10,000.

This new edifice will greatly increase the means of usefulness possessed by the Institution. It will give facilities for carrying on the work upon a more extended and profitable scale. It will enable the blind to work with much more comfort and convenience, and of course profit, to themselves. It will furnish to them some advantages and facilities which will measurably counterbalance the great disadvantages under which they must ever labor on account of their infirmity, and will enable them to compete with other workmen at less fearful odds.

The establishment will be conducted upon the same general principles as heretofore. The workmen will be furnished with stock and tools; they will work by piece-work; and the rate of their wages will be as high as the profit upon the sales will allow. It will be made, as much as possible, an industrious and self-supporting, and not an eleemosynary establishment. A favorable opportunity will be given for trying the plan of having the workmen board themselves out of the Institution, and taking their places as members of general society, instead of constituting a community of blind persons.

The accounts of the Treasurer, with the proper vouchers, are herewith laid before you; and you are referred to them for the condition of the finances.

The work of levelling the grounds, and making other alterations in the premises which have become necessary by the change in the grade of the streets, and the sums expended upon the new shop, have made the expenses of the year exceed the usual income. On the other hand, however, there is promise of more than the usual supply for the current year. The legacy of ten thousand dollars, left by Mr. Bromfield, will be doubly welcome. In common with other charitable institutions, ours has received proof of his kindness and foresight. This truly modest man strove to conceal, during his lifetime, his generosity even from those to whose wants he carefully ministered; and the benevolence of his spirit became known to his townsmen generally by the manner in which he left them,—as an angel is discovered by the rustling of his wings in his departure. The greatness of his gifts was equalled by the wisdom of their distribution. His catholic spirit embraced all classes of the unfortunate. His wise provision for their comfort will long endure; and thousands who never saw his face will rise up and call him blessed.

By an act of the Legislature of Massachusetts, passed April, 1848, it was provided that a sum of money should be appropriated yearly from the State treasury, during three years, for the purpose of trying the experiment of training and teaching idiotic children, provided that any of the charitable institutions under the patronage of the State would undertake to conduct the experiment. The object was one of public charity. It was an attempt to carry out the humane idea of making the State pro-

vide means of nurture and instruction for every class of its unfortunate children. It was kindred in spirit to that upon which this Institution is conducted. We, therefore, most willingly consented that any aid which this establishment could afford, without detriment to the blind, should be given to the new plan.

It was well understood, moreover, that the movement had been made in consequence of the exertions of Dr. Howe; and that he would have the direction of the experiment. The Trustees became responsible to the State for the expenditure of the money upon the experiment, without, however, really incurring any risk of loss to the Institution, because Dr. Howe became personally responsible for any excess of cost over the receipts. All moneys received were to be paid into our treasury, and all bills were audited and passed regularly through the books.

The new school was commenced and the household organized within the walls of the Institution, but entirely apart, in the wing appropriated for the Director's family, but voluntarily relinquished by him. It is now removed to a house in the immediate neighbourhood, and we are happy to be able to say, that it gives good promise of success. It is probably the kernel from which will spring up a goodly establishment, that shall give nurture and instruction to a large class of children, compared with whom the blind, and even the deaf mutes, are fortunate and highly-favored beings.

It is thought proper to make this brief statement, in order to prevent any misapprehension respecting the connection between the Institution for the Blind and the projected one for idiotic or feeble-minded

children. It will be seen by the accompanying Report of the Director, that the teachers, and others employed in the Institution, have discharged the duties of their various offices with diligence and faithfulness.

The account of the Steward's department, and the various inventories required by law, are herewith inclosed. Nothing has been done in the printing department during the past year. The books have been even more in demand, in this country and in England, than formerly; some of the early editions are quite out of print; but as most of the applicants are poor, and as the expense of printing is great, the work has been suspended for want of funds. This is to be regretted, because there is now no establishment in the world where books in any considerable number are printed for the blind, in the English language.\* The Cyclopædia compiled by the Director reached its sixth volume, and stopped; this work, which was the only one that contained varied and general information, should be completed. Moreover, several of the early editions of school-books are quite out of print. This enterprise ought not to be abandoned; and it is earnestly commended to the attention of those who, being blessed with the means, are seeking modes of investment which shall give the greatest return of good.

Finally, in closing, the Institution is warmly recommended to the Corporation, the Legislature, and the public, as one of the most useful and least ob-

---

\* Since this was written, information has been received that several school-books have been printed, in raised letters, at the Virginia Institution for the Blind.

jectionable means by which all who are highly favored of God may discharge their duty towards those from whom he withholds some of his richest blessings, and thus makes measurably dependent for happiness and support upon the sense of justice and humanity in their fellow-men.

|                    |   |                                                   |
|--------------------|---|---------------------------------------------------|
| STEPHEN FAIRBANKS, | } | <i>Trustees on<br/>the part of<br/>the State.</i> |
| SAMUEL P. LOUD,    |   |                                                   |
| ROBERT RANTOUL,    |   |                                                   |
| HORACE MANN,       |   |                                                   |

|                         |   |                                                         |
|-------------------------|---|---------------------------------------------------------|
| THOMAS G. CARY,         | } | <i>Trustees on<br/>the part of<br/>the Corporation.</i> |
| THEOPHILUS P. CHANDLER, |   |                                                         |
| J. J. DIXWELL,          |   |                                                         |
| JOHN D. FISHER,         |   |                                                         |
| BENJAMIN LORING,        |   |                                                         |
| SAMUEL MAY,             |   |                                                         |
| GEORGE R. RUSSELL,      |   |                                                         |
| CHARLES SUMNER,         |   |                                                         |

S. G. HOWE, *Secretary.*



## APPENDIX A.

---

### THE REPORT OF THE DIRECTOR CONCERNING THE WORK DEPARTMENT.

TO THE TRUSTEES: —

GENTLEMEN, — It will be seen by the statement herewith inclosed, that the Work Department of this Institution has gone on prosperously during the past year. More blind persons have been employed, more wages paid, and more goods manufactured and sold, than during any previous year.

It has been in operation as an independent department of the Institution more than five years. It was started with a cash capital, in the form of a loan from the general funds of the Institution, of \$ 4,756.96. Upon this capital as a basis, it has employed from twenty to thirty-five blind men and women every year. It has paid them, in wages, the gross sum of \$ 10,000.

The amount of sales has steadily increased, from less than one thousand dollars a year, to the sum of \$ 15,881.41, in 1849.

The following is an abstract of the settlement of the books for 1849.

*Liabilities.*

|                                  |                   |
|----------------------------------|-------------------|
| Amount due to Institution, . . . | \$ 4,756.96       |
| “ “ individuals, . . .           | 5,103.62          |
|                                  | <hr/> \$ 9,860.58 |

*Assets.*

|                                |                   |
|--------------------------------|-------------------|
| Good debts due, . . . . .      | \$ 2,434.22       |
| Stock on hand, . . . . .       | 6,034.41          |
| Cash, . . . . .                | 195.46            |
| Balance of indebtedness, . . . | 1,196.49          |
|                                | <hr/> \$ 9,860.58 |

This shows the balance of profit and loss for the year to be \$ 203.50, which is the amount of gain. In January, 1848, the balance of indebtedness was \$ 1,521.28; in January, 1849, it was reduced to \$ 1,399.99;\* in January, 1850, it was further reduced to \$ 1,196.49.

The amount of sales in 1848 was \$ 12,522.80. There were twenty-eight persons employed, and the sum paid them was \$ 2,079.62.

The amount of sales in 1849 was \$ 15,881.48. The number of blind persons employed was thirty-six. The amount paid to them in wages was \$ 2,584.48.

There will be found appended to this report a list of the articles manufactured and sold, the names of the workmen, and the amount paid to each one. If the enterprise should now be discontinued, and the stock sold and the account closed, it would be shown that it has cost only \$ 1,196.49 to carry on the department five years, to give employment to the blind, and to distribute over \$ 10,000 to them in

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\* By the printed Report of last year, the balance was made \$ 1,157.41 ; afterwards there was paid to the workmen as their percentage on profits, \$ 242.58 ; making \$ 1,399.99.

the shape of wages. These results are most gratifying, and well repay us for having persevered through so many years, under discouraging circumstances, in the plan of erecting an independent industrial department for such adult blind persons as cannot find employment elsewhere. It has been steadily improving in the mode of conducting the work and disposing of the goods. The experience of each year has enabled us to improve the whole system.

I may, without impropriety, speak of the order, the neatness, the economy, and the strictness of accountability, which prevail at the sales-room, in the city, because they are owing mainly to Mr. J. W. Patten. He has been a confidential agent there for years, and given great satisfaction. Himself a former pupil of the Institution, he furnishes a remarkable instance of how much a man may do with a small lever, if he only gets his fulcrum very near to the weight.

The workshop has been for the most part under the direction of Mr. Lyman Smalley, who, notwithstanding his blindness, most industriously exercises a good deal of mechanical skill and dexterity.

Some of the men are persons of character and intelligence, who have higher views than the mere wages, and have contributed by their good conduct to the success of the establishment. The department, however, is by no means in so good a condition as I wish it to be, — as it ought to be, and will be. The blind have not yet learned to use stock as economically, or to work as vigorously and rapidly, as other workmen at the same trades.

The fact that they waste more stock arises, probably, in good part, from a fault in our system, which fails to make each man strictly responsible for the stock he uses. It has not been possible to do so in the small and inconvenient shop which we have hitherto occupied. As soon as the new shop is finished, which will be by the 1st of April, the system will be amended, so as to make the profits of each man depend partly upon his economy of stock.

The fact that they do not work with so much vigor and rapidity as other workmen is to be accounted for partly by the consideration, that, as a class, they have not the same bodily strength and energy as other men; and partly by the consideration, that they are not impelled by sufficiently strong motives to put forth the vigor and energy which they really possess as resolutely as they might do. The system which fails to incite them to do this is measurably responsible for their short-coming.

Our system has been liable to this objection heretofore. We formerly attempted to get upon the right plan, that is, to charge the men directly for their board, and to credit them with their wages; but owing to various causes,—the infancy of the experiment, the inability of some men little experienced in work to earn enough even for their board, and, perhaps, want of firmness on my part,—it was not duly persevered in. Our plan during several years has been to provide the workmen with board, and to consider this as part payment of their wages,—that is, to lower the tariff of prices paid to them for work on account of their having board. However little, therefore, a man worked during a month,

he received something for it, in cash, upon pay-day.

It is obvious that this is not the best way to stimulate the industry of the workmen, and it has been considered only as a temporary plan. It has been one of the measures taken to increase their self-confidence, and to bring them in a gradual manner to accomplish more than they have ever been able to do before. Perhaps some who could not have been induced to undertake the apparently hopeless task of supporting themselves entirely, were led in this way to try whether they could do so in part.

Still further measures are necessary, before they can be made, as a body, to perform the greatest amount of work which they have the capacity of doing. One of these goes into operation at the commencement of this year. The rate of wages paid for work is increased, and the workmen are charged with board at the rate of \$ 1.50 per week, which is barely the cost of what they consume. Six dollars a month are to be deducted from their earnings, and the balance paid to them in cash. They will all be required to earn at least this sum monthly, or to leave.

This measure is only preparatory to another, which it is proposed to adopt as soon as the new shop is finished, which will be before the 1st of April. The workmen will then be required to provide themselves with board in private families, in the neighbourhood.

In the last Report I set forth the reasons in favor of this measure, and the experience and reflection of another year bring stronger convictions that it is



well calculated to promote the best interests and the happiness of the blind, as a class. In laying down any general rule of policy, we cannot, of course, be turned from it because an individual case may now and then arise where it will not apply. It may happen that, by this rule, a worthy blind man may be cut off from some advantages, but we must look to the good of the great majority.

It is not desirable in itself that there should be an establishment in which the graduates of our school, or other adult persons, can find an asylum for life; it is not even desirable that there should be one on which they can lean partly for support; — but it is a necessity. Experience has taught us, that a certain number of graduates, and certain others who are overtaken by the calamity of blindness in mid-life, cannot support themselves by their unassisted labor. It is to save them from idleness, want, and the almshouse, that the work department was organized. In putting it upon a permanent footing, and giving it the character of an independent establishment, we must be careful not to make it so attractive as to lessen the efforts of any blind persons to find for themselves an occupation and a livelihood in their own town or village, or somewhere away from asylums. It should be the last resort. In the last year's Report, I advocated the plan of merely supplying the men with work, and opposed the plan of gathering them together to be boarded and lodged in company.

The reasons and considerations for this, which I urged at some length, are briefly these: —

That it is unnatural, undesirable, and necessarily

injurious to the moral nature, for a number of adult persons of one sex to form a community and live together.

That it is still more injurious for a number of persons suffering under a common infirmity so to live together.

That, instead of conforming to the sound principle of dispersing the blind, as much as possible, in general society, mingling them with others, and subjecting them to the ordinary influences of life, the system of "commons" directly violates that principle, congregates them together unnecessarily, and tends to make of them a class apart.

That it increases the clannish spirit, already too prevalent everywhere among the blind, by making them associate more closely with each other than they otherwise would, at the expense of association and sympathy with seeing people.

That, without vexatious restrictions, it must multiply the temptations and the probabilities of intermarriage among the blind, which, in most cases, is forbidden by God's law, under the pains and penalties of transmission of weakness and infirmity to successive generations.

That institutions are open to the charge of increasing the extent of the calamity of blindness, if marriages are formed and children are brought into the world inflicted with it, or with an hereditary tendency to it, in consequence of any acquaintance or association between the parents which was not absolutely necessary to the purposes of such institutions.

That, besides these considerations, drawn from gen-

eral principles, the experience of the world, in regard to the effects of similar communities, is against them.

That, even among the blind, the injurious effects of such communities are apparent in the great asylums for adults in Paris, Naples, and elsewhere, and that the introduction of industrial occupation would not prevent all the evils engendered in such asylums from reappearing in this country.

That, even if it were possible to organize and keep up a large community of blind persons in such a way as to obviate these objections, it would not promote their moral well-being, and, of course, their interests and happiness, so much as they would be promoted by bringing them within the genial and refining influence of the ordinary family circle.

I should not think it worth while to restate these reasons, which were to me so conclusive, and which have seemed conclusive to many intelligent blind persons, were it not that considerations of a different nature have induced the managers of an excellent institution, in a neighbouring State, to adopt in their new establishment for adult blind persons a system by which the workmen are brought together under one roof, made to work in a common shop, to sleep in a common dormitory, to eat in a common hall, and to form a community by themselves.

It might well make me doubt the force of such reasons as I have urged in favor of dispersing the adult blind, as much as possible, in the community, when I find so high an authority as the managers of the New York Institution advocating the opposite course of congregating them together, — were it not

that those reasons seem founded upon inflexible principles of nature, and destined to prevail finally over any temporary and accidental considerations.

Some of these considerations are set forth in the Annual Report of that Institution, just published; and received since the first part of this Report was written. The subject is of great importance to the welfare of the blind, and especially of those in parts of the country where establishments for the employment of adults have not yet assumed a permanent form, and I shall take the liberty freely to examine them.

There is one reason set forth in the Report, in favor of the system of living in common, which is sound and conclusive, so far as it goes: — “ *The expense of living in such a community will be reduced to the lowest possible rate.*”

Economy in the management of public establishments is a very important matter; it is not usually overlooked in the conduct of charitable institutions in this country; on the contrary, it is generally placed in the very front rank of the virtues of administration. Other considerations, even moral considerations, must often yield to it; the job for supporting the poor is sometimes given to the lowest bidder; the gospel for overseers of the poor is often no higher than the gospel according to Dr. Franklin.

It must be granted that the system of boarding the blind may be made the cheapest, as far as money goes. We have tried it here many years; we find that the workmen can be boarded for a dollar a week less in the Institution, by averaging their expenses

among the pupils, than they can obtain board for in respectable families. "A dollar a week!— what, fifty dollars a year!" it will be said; "that settles the whole matter! It is equal to one quarter, or fifth, of the whole earnings of a blind man!"

But there are other things to be taken into the account. In the first place, it is admitted that the adult blind should have an establishment by themselves. Now, in order to build up and keep in good condition a proper establishment for a large community of blind persons, there should be a considerable expense incurred. If they are to live there permanently, and "have a comfortable home," the building should be very spacious. It should not be all for work, and none for play. There should be ample grounds for walking and recreation in pleasant weather, and covered piazzas for exercise in bad weather. It should be in, or near, a large city, in order to have a market for the work. The cost of such an establishment, with sufficient land, and with a fund for keeping it in repair and in order, could hardly be less than \$50,000. Here is an interest, say of \$3,000 yearly. Then it must be under the direction of a board of management, and the time and services of the managers are surely worth something. Gentlemen may say they give them gratuitously, but surely they do not mean to say they give what is worth nothing. They are, or ought to be, worth something, — worth a great deal; if gentlemen could be spared from devoting them to the management of a boarding-house for grown-up blind persons, they would, perhaps, give the same value in money to the Institution, or in time to other charitable insti-



tutions; and according to Dr. Franklin, a penny saved is a penny earned. Put down these services, then, at \$ 3,000 yearly; add it to the interest on the capital, and we have a sum of \$ 6,000 yearly to add to the actual expenses of boarding one hundred blind persons. But let us call it only \$ 5,200.

Now, suppose we dispense with the great boarding establishment, and place the interest of what it would cost to build and keep it up, say \$ 2,600, on the credit side of the workmen's account, by paying them so much higher wages; then place to the same account, \$ 2,600, the worth of the time of the board of managers; and that will raise the amount of the workmen's pay by just a dollar a week, which is exactly the sum which would be saved by boarding them all together. Then we can have a modest workshop, like those for ordinary men, and dispense with a great building, standing at the corner of the streets, and calling attention to an asylum for adult blind men. We can dispense with part, at least, of the public exhibition of the blind, which a great boarding-house would necessarily cause. Instead of a public charitable institution, we shall have a comparatively private charitable institution. We conceal from the public, and from our left hand, part of the good which our right hand does. We shall give to each blind man a dollar a week, wrapped up from sight in the sum of his wages, instead of giving him a dollar a week in the more palpable and less agreeable form of board, lodging, and *management*. Thus our secret charity will comfort and support him, as the dew nourishes the grass in the darkness of the night, and not as does the rattling rain, which often

beats down and humbles to the earth the tender blade by its very weight.

But I am willing to concede the greater economy of the system of "commons," that is, in the narrow sense of the word economy, which confines it to matters of dollars and cents. The question, however, should not be, which will cost most, but which system will conduce most to the welfare and the happiness of the blind.

In any point, except that of saving money, the system of distribution in the community seems preferable to that of congregating them together. Indeed, some of the very circumstances which are urged as reasons against the system which I have advocated, seem to me, when carefully considered, to be reasons in favor of it. For instance, the difficulty of the men going to and fro between the shop and their boarding-house, and "the exposure to the inclemencies of the weather," and to inconveniences, or supposed dangers, attendant upon such an arrangement, which are urged in the New York Report.

Who that has ever seen, in the remote parts of New England, early on a cold wintry morning, a troop of little boys breaking their path for miles, through deep, untrodden snow, to the district school, but has felt that they were training themselves to hardihood and courage in the struggle of life?—that they were learning a valuable lesson before they reached the school-house door?—that the hour of strife with the elements was better spent than it would have been in conning a book? He who would establish a line of comfortable coaches, and

carry them to and fro *gratis*, would do them harm, and not good.

I have so often urged in our Reports the necessity of training the blind to habits of hardihood and self-reliance, that any farther argument by me would be tiresome; but I cannot refrain from quoting the language of the last Report of the excellent Institution for the Blind in New York. It says:—

“The idea that the blind are a helpless race of beings, quite unable to do any useful thing, or to do it *as* other people do it, is the source of much greater evils than that just alluded to. It manifests itself in an undue and unnecessary solicitude on the part of the friends of a blind child, prompting them to watch its every motion with the most careful anxiety, and to allow it to go nowhere without an attendant, nor do the simplest thing without assistance. The result is, to make them timid and inactive; to make them really the helpless beings, which this ceaseless solicitude would induce them to believe. It is vastly better to let them take their chance. It may, indeed, be at the expense of some tumbles and bruises, but the confidence and self-reliance which it will inspire will more than compensate for the risk. And it is invariably the case, that those who have been accustomed to depend upon themselves in this manner, get on much better at school than those who have been too tenderly dealt with at home. It begets a *mental*, no less than a *physical* timidity, and inactivity, which can scarcely be urged to self-exertion and self-dependence. Nothing is more irksome to those who have been schooled in this necessary discipline, than to have every thing

that is said to them, and every thing that is done for them, refer especially to their privation.”\*

And, again, here is sound doctrine, soundly preached, respecting the treatment of the blind generally: — “Whatever is done to ameliorate their condition should tend to foster and encourage, instead of weakening, a feeling of self-reliance and independence.”†

No better answer than the above can be given to the objection urged in another part of the same Report to the blind living away from their workshop, in private families, on the ground of exposure to the “dangers of the streets and the inclemencies of the weather.”‡ “It may, indeed, be at the expense of a few tumbles and bruises, but the confidence and self-reliance it will inspire will more than compensate for the risk.”§

Our pupils would be apt to say to the objections urged to their boarding away from their shop, as other workmen do, on account of difficulties, dangers, exposure to the weather, and the like, Surely this would be to prevent us from living in manhood by the precepts you taught us in youth; this is not “fostering and encouraging, but weakening, a feeling of self-reliance and independence.”||

It is said by the same authority quoted above, that “those who have in any way the care of the blind should treat them in a way calculated to remind them of their privation as little as possible.”¶ If this be true in any sense, it cannot surely be true in all,

\* Report of the New York Institution for the Blind, 1850, p. 12.

† Ibid., p. 12.

§ Ibid., p. 12.

¶ Ibid., p. 12.

‡ Ibid., p. 8.

|| Ibid.

for their blindness is a truth and a reality to the sufferers, and truths and realities are to be bravely met, face to face, and not *dodged*; but if it be true in any sense, we should surely not act in accordance with it, by making the adult blind live together unnecessarily in one great company, thus reminding them and others of their privation, making them a prominent object of remark, and preventing them from doing as other people do, and living as other people live, in small families.

It is indeed true, as is said in the New York Report, that nothing is more irksome to the blind, who have been properly trained, "than to have every thing that is done for them refer especially to their privation." But, surely, bringing them together to pass their lives in a great building, "*commodiously arranged, and supplied with every thing which can adapt them to the peculiar wants of the blind, will*" not "*constitute all the requisites of a comfortable home.*" \*

A comfortable home! Would there were such for every blind man! But, be it remembered, it must be such as would be a comfortable home for a seeing man. Now, there has never been contrived, and there never can be contrived, any institution or community to meet the wants of the social nature, and gratify the yearnings of the soul, as does the institution of the family, ordained of God. No other calls into healthy play so many faculties and sentiments of the human mind and heart; no other so elevates what is low, and purifies what is selfish. Every thing within its

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\* New York Report, p. 8.



habitation, from hearth-stone to roof-tree, becomes endeared to the indwellers by common interest and common cares ; woman spreads around her softening influence ; love, sanctified by marriage, becomes spiritual ; children celebrate in it the joyful immortality of youth ; brothers and sisters are ever weaving within its walls the tender ties of affection which prepare their own hearts for wider sympathy with mankind, while, by continually drawing upon the fountains of parental affection, they prevent them from being chilled into selfishness, even by the winter of age. The family indeed furnishes the true elixir of life, and prevents the race from growing old.

The blind man may not be able to assume any of these tender relations in his own person, but surely, for this very reason, he should not be left in cold isolation of the heart, but have his affections and his sympathies kept alive and warm by surrounding him with the genial atmosphere of domestic love. He has more need than others of the comforts and joys of domestic relations. His infirmity increases, not lessens, his desire for them, and increases too his capacity for their enjoyment. In all that regards his moral nature and his social affections, he has capacities far higher than the deaf mute, — higher even than those of ordinary men ; for while his infirmity does not lessen the strength of those affections, it increases his need and his desire for their exercise and enjoyment.

It may be said by the worldly wise, that this is all very well in theory, but that in common life it cannot be realized ; that blind workmen, if they seek board in private families, must go among the poor, and will

be as likely to meet with ignorance and vulgarity as with refining influences. But ignorance and vulgarity are only the accidents, not the essentials, of humanity, in any of its phases; and even in the midst of these, the family relation is gradually refining men in this country, and wherever there is progress. By it the sexual relations have a chance to be spiritualized. Some of the best feelings and affections of our nature have free scope for development and for growth where the family exists, and where it does not, they have not. Better ignorance and vulgarity with these feelings and affections, than the learning of monks and the refinement of nuns without them, — without even a soil for the seeds of love to grow in.

Ignorance and vulgarity do not engender in natural families such moral evils and such loathsome vices, as have been and must be engendered in the unnatural families of the monastery and the nunnery. The common feeling against these institutions, as being strongholds of religious superstition, is but a prejudice and superstition itself; it exists against them, not as *religious* institutions, but as institutions of other religion than ours. The true objections are of a moral nature. These unnatural families thwart and stunt the natural growth of the human affections, and produce distortions and deformities, so that all their piety and all their prayers, and even the more rational attempt to introduce industrial labors, cannot prevent them from being prolific of evil.

Now, most of the objections that exist to such establishments, on account of their untoward influ-

ence upon the moral and social nature, may be urged, though with less force, against such large communities of blind men and blind women as it is proposed to found and build up.

But to come to more particular considerations, and to the practical details of this matter. It is said, that, besides the exposure to the inclemencies of the weather, and the dangers of the street, the workmen would find great practical difficulty in getting to and fro between their workshops and their houses. It would hardly do to urge this to the blind themselves, as an argument against their living in private families, as ordinary workmen do. Most of them would smile at the notion, that they would always require a guide to lead them backward and forward, even though the distance were half a mile or a mile; many of them would need to be guided but half a dozen times, and then they would go alone of their own choice.

Besides, it should be the policy to have as much work as possible performed away from the general workshop. All who can work quietly and unobserved at home should be encouraged to do so. The less of show about a great establishment, the better. The women, especially, could do much of their work at home. Of those who work in the establishment, most of the women, and a very few of the men, might need a guide, but even to them the expense of hiring a little boy or girl, morning and evening, would be not greater than they ought to incur for procuring exercise in the open air, and a long walk daily, even if they should live in the establishment where they work. This matter of

exercise is an important one, and should be attended to.

It is well known that the blind can with difficulty be induced to take as much exercise in the open air as is desirable for their health. Their very infirmity prevents them in most cases from walking, with elastic and rapid step, long enough to send the fresh blood to the surface of the body. They walk slowly and cautiously, and with measured tread. A blind man with ruddy cheeks and vigorous health is a phenomenon. They have a disinclination to much locomotion. Now, the experience of any practical man connected with public institutions, for any class of persons whatever, shows, that wherever halls, piazzas, courts, or inclosed grounds are depended upon for inducing the inmates to take exercise, they usually fail to accomplish the desired purpose. Other people will not, and the blind, especially, will not take sufficient exercise in any such places. Besides, to go to the root of the matter, the whole benefit of exercise in the open air cannot be obtained when one walks, or swings dumb-bells, or does any thing else with the constant consciousness that he is doing it mainly for the sake of the exercise; if he is considering at every turn whether he is any better or not, whether he has done enough or not, his mental anxiety lessens the good the exercise can do to him. Better walk one mile to get a dinner, than walk two miles to get an appetite.

There are always found in a community of blind persons a number who are called "seeing blind"; that is, persons whose visual organs seem formed well enough, but are deficient in functional vigor.

They can see to walk about by daylight, — to distinguish large objects, and even bright colors, — but cannot distinguish minute objects; they are purblind; they see men as trees walking.

Now, it will be found that, with rare exceptions, the “seeing blind” are inferior in bodily and mental vigor to the “blind blind,” and for the reason that, in most cases, the imperfection of sight is the consequence of poor and feeble bodily organization, that is, of an inferior physical condition. If this were the place, it might be shown that near-sightedness, and other visual imperfections, not amounting quite to purblindness, usually imply an inferiority of bodily organization, — a fact which, if generally known, might materially diminish the display of eye-glasses.

The seeing blind, or purblind, are commonly very glad to serve their more vigorous brethren as guides; indeed, many of them seem hardly fit for any thing else. They would serve the workmen and workwomen as guides very cheaply.

Let us beware, in this matter of health, of being penny-wise and pound-foolish. We are establishing a system, not for a year or two, but for some generations at least. A blind man may, perhaps, save something during two or three years, by not incurring the expense of a leader, and the loss of time for a daily walk. He who eats and sleeps under the same roof with his workshop may seem to have an advantage over one who lives a mile off, and is obliged to walk that distance four times every day; but it is likely that in the long run the latter would do more work than the former. He would be more likely to preserve his health; he would, as a matter



of course, get his exercise daily, while the other would get it only when he felt in the humor to take it, — when the weather should be pleasant, — but never regularly, until obliged to do so by the outward manifestation in an alarming form of some bodily ailment, which had been gradually undermining his constitution, and which he might have avoided if he had lived at a distance from his workshop.

Many other objections might be urged, both against this system of “commons,” and other points of superiority shown for the opposite system, but it seems needless.

It may be replied, that, admitting a certain degree of force in these objections to congregating the blind together, and a certain superiority, in many respects, in the system of having them live scattered in the community, still, the difficulty may be avoided by a modification which will allow those who can earn enough to pay their board, and who choose to do so, to go and live in private families, and those who cannot afford or who are not inclined to do so, to remain in the community. But this leaving a door open for escape, this sort of compromise between two systems, like most compromises, implies a want of faith in one's convictions of what is right, or a want of courage in following them. It is not unlikely that such a mixed system would have some of the disadvantages of both the others between which it is a compromise, and would not have all the advantages of either.

This is a matter worth considering seriously. If we are to build up a community of blind persons, we are bound to give it the highest moral and intel-

lectual tone that we can. The elements out of which its atmosphere is to be formed should be those most favorable to intelligence and virtue. The principal element must be the character of the inmates. Do what we may in the way of officers, and rules and regulations, the pervading spirit of the community will be that resulting from the character, tastes, and conduct of the inmates.

Now, let us look at the effects of allowing those workmen who can live elsewhere, and wish to live elsewhere, to go out to board and leave the rest behind. The assumed cheapness of the commons would make it absolutely necessary to all those who, from want of bodily strength or mental vigor, could not earn enough to board out. All the feeble and inefficient ones would remain. Next, those who really possess more power, but who are indolent and improvident, — who need the stimulus of some strong motive, the spur of necessity, — they would remain. Then those who have strength and energy enough to earn good wages, but who are inclined to weigh money against any social pleasures or moral advantages that they might have by living out in the world, would be decided by the temptation of gain to remain. Lastly, a few of the most energetic and enterprising, a few who have most courage and resolution to struggle against a calamity which tends to cut off the blind from the world and society, — those few would seek the social pleasures and moral advantages which general society gives them, and to maintain their places as members of it. It is easy to see what the loss of these, the most energetic and aspiring members, would be to the blind who should remain in

the establishment. Such spirits in every community give a tone and spirit to the others. They are the natural leaders. Without their continual presence and influence, the moral and intellectual tone of the community would be lowered, and gradually become as lifeless and spiritless as that of an almshouse.

I have treated this matter with seriousness and earnestness, because it is a very weighty one. It is not a question of mere local administration, or of any temporary expedient, but a question, the practical answer to which must be an exponent of the theory upon which our treatment of the blind as a class is based, and which shows that theory to be sound or unsound. We are not to look for immediate effects, but to consider what will be the influence of the course we adopt during a long period of time upon those for whom we are providing, because most of them will be likely to remain in the establishment for life. At the end of twenty-five years, the one hundred, more or less, of young men and young women whom we are now providing for will be past the noon of life, and the question should be, Will it be better for them to have been living together in a community by themselves, or to have been living scattered about in ordinary families? By which mode will the greatest number find some place in society which they can fill with usefulness to others and happiness to themselves? Which mode is most in accordance with the principle that the blind form, not a natural class, not a class apart, but an accidental class, and are to be treated accordingly? and which best accords with the maxim, that we are to

treat them as much like other people as possible? By which mode shall we best counteract any untoward effects upon the character growing out of blindness, — by bringing the blind together to act upon each other, or by dispersing them in the community at large, and subjecting them to the general influences of society? By which mode shall we exert the most favorable influence on their character, and most promote their interests and happiness?

It seems certain that we shall do so by the method I have now advocated, and of which some of the advantages have been set forth above. Its good effects may not be so immediate or apparent, as to be striking to ordinary observers, for some of them will be merely preventive of evil in their operation. It may not add so much to the *eclat* of an institution as a display of “dining-rooms, dormitories, bathing and sitting rooms,” chapel, &c., but it will in a noiseless and secret way contribute most to the interests and happiness of the blind. It is in vain to try to dodge the truth, that a workman with eyesight will ever have so great advantage over one without it, that the latter cannot compete with him. We must come to the aid of many of the blind, and enable them to vindicate their right to a fair share of labor and of profit; but let us do it in the way the least to offend their delicacy and to attract the attention of the world, — let us do it with the least possible parade of what will be called charity, but what is really only right and justice.

I will not close without saying a word or two touching the effect of blindness upon the character

and happiness of the subjects of it, so far, at least, as may throw any light upon the question which has been under discussion.

What is blindness? A mere bodily infirmity or imperfection, which deprives a man of the perception of light, and limits the freedom of his locomotion, but which touches not his life, which impairs not his health, which dwarfs not his mind, which affects not his soul, which crushes not his affections, and which cuts him off from none of the high and essential sources of human happiness.

Why is it, then, to some a grievous and dreadful calamity, entailing endless sorrow and suffering, while to others it hardly seems to be a misfortune, because, after a little, it brings in its train cheerfulness, and a greater enjoyment of inward life? The true answer to this question helps to set forth the glory or shame, as it may be, of civilization, and to illustrate the beauty of Christianity.

To the savage, the thunderbolt that strikes him blind is like a poisoned arrow, that kills not outright, but leaves him to linger on in a life of wretchedness and want. To him sight was the compass which pointed the way to all his pleasures; — it is shivered, and he cannot advance a step. His life was all outward, and it has perished with his sight. To him the earth was truly a mother; she has suddenly become a blackened corse, and henceforth he is but a cumberer of the ground.

To a man of wealth, of culture, of virtue, of happy social and domestic relations, the blinding bolt would give only passing pain, and leave but short-enduring sorrow. Recovered from the shock,



he would find that all most valuable within was unscathed. To him the compass and guide of life were his affections and his duties ; the blow which blasted his sight has not touched or disturbed these ; they guide him still in the darkness, as they did in the light, to the hearts of his friends, and to the bosom of his God.

To those who have always enjoyed sight, it seems as if the loss of it would be the most dreadful calamity that could befall them ; but this is because they do not correctly conceive the consequences of such loss. A familiar illustration will show their nature.

Suppose a man who is possessed of all the comforts and refinements of outward life, who has a cultivated mind and literary tastes, who has a warm heart and pure affections, and is blessed with deserving objects of his love, — suppose such a man to be making merry with his relations and friends, and playing at blind-man's-buff with his children. While he is blindfolded is he not as merry as ever ? Does he not love the little ones that he catches in his arms as well as though he could see them ?

Now, suppose that he should find he could not remove the bandage for a day, a week, or a year. He would then be a blind man ; but in what would he have changed ? What would he have lost ? What great source of happiness would have been dried up in his bosom ?

He soon learns to go about his house alone, and about the neighbourhood with a guide. He finds he can attend to any ordinary business if he chooses to do so. The world and its affairs, his friends and their welfare, have lost none of their interest for

him. His home becomes doubly dear to him; and there he finds sources of pleasure which increase as they are drawn upon. In his library he finds no really essential change, because poetry, philosophy, and history lose no charms by being borne to his mind on the voice of affection, and custom soon gives to the habit of dictating all the pleasure there was in writing. Conversation, by which we learn more and improve more than by any and all modes of communing with other minds, becomes to him the means of new pleasure and profit.

But it is mostly in the greater development of his affections, and his exercise of them, that he finds compensations which he could not have hoped for; his home is not long dark because the rays of the sun are shut out, but, like the fabled cavern, it glows with the light of the gems which adorn it. The love and loyalty of his wife; the affection of his children; the tender regard and tried fidelity of his friends; — these jewels of the heart shine brighter for the darkness around him, and he feels that he would not lose one of them to recover his lost vision. Indulgence in the exercise of disinterested affection is the most harmless intemperance, and the blind man intoxicates himself by daily draughts. This is not mere theory; experience shows that persons who become blind often grow more amiable, contented, and even cheerful, than before.

If it were a question between the sacrifice of sight or hearing, no one who duly weighs the comparative value of the two senses to his higher nature, and their importance as ministers of the mind and of the soul, would hesitate as to which of the two would be

the greatest loss to him. He who prefers the body and its pleasures, the outward world and its beauties, would choose deafness ; but he who prefers the mind and its improvement, the affections and their enjoyment, would choose blindness. This preference of hearing, however, would be given only by persons of mental culture, and, in the present state of society, of wealth ; for to the man obliged to labor for a livelihood, especially if others are dependent upon him, blindness would be far the greater calamity.

The eye ministers most to the body, its wants and its pleasures ; the ear to the mind, its capacities and its affections. The choice which would be made between them, were one forced to the dreadful alternative of the loss of either, would be in some measure a test of the extent to which the spirit of Christianity had pervaded the community in which he lives. If society practically recognizes the right of every one to a share of labor and of its profits, if its spirit is that of human brotherhood, of mutual coöperation, aid, and assistance, then a man would choose the lesser evil, — that which affects mostly the body, and impairs not the higher nature, — he would prefer to be blind. If, on the contrary, the spirit is that of selfish competition and antagonism, if a man must stand or fall solely by his own strength or weakness, if brotherhood means only kith and kin, then he would accept the other evil, for that would leave him the chance of living, — he would prefer to be deaf. Now there is, probably, no country in the world, where the heavy consequences of blindness are so much lightened to the sufferer as they are in ours ; but even here, unless a man by his

family relation is in the focus of a higher civilization than pervades general society, and has the means of maintaining his position there, he had better be halt and lame and deaf and dumb, than blind.

In the general struggle for wealth, competition and antagonism are the rule, mutual coöperation and assistance the rare exception; the weakest goes to the wall. All the known and practised modes of doing business or of performing handicraft work are adapted to the sense of sight. Whatever charity men may have for the blind in other respects, in the way of business they have none; they grind them between the upper and nether millstones of competition.

By capital, by competition, by subdivision, by machinery, and by various ways, the profit upon manual labor is rapidly dwindling to the minimum that will support life. Eyesight gives to the common workman an advantage over the blind, which, of course, he will not fail to make use of, and which he cannot be expected to forego. If it were well known that, unless the few simple trades practised by the blind were left to them, they would all be driven to the almshouse, or would die, still men would rush into those trades, undersell the blind, drive them out of the market, and into the almshouse or the grave; they would heed little which it might be. This indicates no purpose of cruelty, no want even of kind feeling; it is only the legitimate effect of the spirit of competition which is the soul of commerce. Nor is this spirit to be complained of; it is necessary in this transition state of society; it is doing a great work; it is performing a high mission, and

preparing the way for a better state of things, — for the final recognition and adoption of the law of Christian brotherhood. Meantime, we must do what we can to keep the blind upon their feet and moving forward in the general throng, for without some support they will fall, and be trodden under foot by the multitude.

If the views thus set forth are sound (and they are the result of a good deal of careful thought), the general policy in the education and treatment of the blind should be, in childhood, to give them the best bodily and mental training and culture, — to quicken their senses, and train them to activity and hardihood, — to develop their understandings, refine their tastes, and cultivate their moral and social nature, always with a view to their living among seeing, and not among blind people; in youth, to place them in such situations as will give them the best chance of finding some useful occupation and position in society; in middle life, to provide, for those who must work hard with their hands for a livelihood, some compensating advantage, which will enable them to compete, in spite of their infirmity, on something like equal terms, with other workmen.

It was to effect this last object that our work department was established, many years ago, and it has had an amount of success that is very gratifying. Compared with the results of similar experiments elsewhere, it is more than satisfactory; but, compared with our ardent wishes, it is not satisfactory. It is not enough that some scores of blind men and women have been enabled to earn sufficient to pay for board and clothing, and a few to lay up



a trifle after so doing. They have more than bellies to fill, and bodies to warm; they have intellectual capacities, social affections, and moral aspirations, and they should be so placed that these may have full development and gratification. They belong to society; they all desire to obtain a place in it; and we must not in any way make it more difficult for them to do so. A loaf and a coat may suffice for a lazy pauper; it is not enough for a blind man, — for such blind men, at least, as may be found by hundreds in this country, — men who have been educated in our schools, and who are willing to work, but who have an honest pride about their social position.

I desire not to spare the blind from work; their happiness will be best promoted by diligent labor; but I do most earnestly desire that they may be enabled to earn, by their patient industry, the rich reward so commonly earned by intelligent workingmen in New England, — a comfortable home, — a home such as we all desire for ourselves, in which there shall be some objects for the gratification of their reasonable wants and their honest affections. The blind man is incapacitated to compete with others by no fault of his own; he has forfeited none of his rights as a man; he has a right, therefore, to expect at the hands of society a chance to work, and sufficient pay to support life and gratify its reasonable wants.

In New England, and in some of the Middle and Western States, full justice is done to the claims of the blind for instruction. But what is wanting everywhere else is still wanting here, to complete the system for the relief of the blind, and that is, the

means of giving occupation, with fair recompense, to all who desire to work, but cannot find employment.

The immediate and pressing want is that of a fund, the interest of which, added to the earnings of industrious blind men, will eke out their wages, and put them on a level with other workmen in point of pay. Thus much they could receive at the hands of society without any sense of obligation, — without feeling that they were particularly objects of charity.

I earnestly hope that it may enter into the hearts of some who have the stewardship of riches, to lend part of it in this way to humanity; it will long continue to make a rich return. I need not commend the sales-room of the Institution to the patronage of its friends. Our principle is to let the goods commend themselves, and not to ask or expect that favor will be shown in the way of trade to the blind, by paying a mill more than the worth of the articles. We do, however, earnestly desire an extension of the business, and a greater number of customers, especially of such customers as we now have. We trust that those who are satisfied with the work will recommend it to their friends and acquaintances. We have now the means of doing more work, and to greater advantage, than ever; and we desire to have more of it to do, in order that we may admit some of the numerous applicants for employment. They are sending to us from all parts of the State, and asking for work; and we must ask the public to give us work in order to employ them.

A single word more, before closing, upon the change which I have advocated in the plan of organization of institutions for adult blind persons.

It will be easy to quote, in refutation of the reasons I have given for it, a great mass of opinion, as shown in the practice of other establishments, and even my own words in former Reports of this Institution. An establishment for adult blind persons, with board in common, has been advocated earnestly. It was, however, considered, at that time, as the least objectionable plan, and it was to be upon a small scale only. Since then, experience and reflection have not been wanting, and I trust the present stand-point is higher and the horizon wider. Indeed, I am most ready to acknowledge that my views respecting the organization of establishments, even for the education of ordinary youth, have materially changed. I think that all the advantages arising from them may be gained, and most of the crying evils attendant upon them avoided, by breaking up the "common system," boarding the youth among families in the neighbourhood, and bringing them together daily for the purposes of instruction and for the advantages of mutual action of their minds upon each other.

We are bribed into a toleration of the present system, so pregnant of evils and so liable to abuse, by money, — by the Poor Richard gospel of penny saved, penny earned. I know not how to express my conviction of the disadvantages and evils of this system in a stronger manner than by saying, that, when I am consulted about the establishment of a new institution for deaf mutes, or even for blind, notwithstanding the peculiar condition of the latter class, my advice is, Build up no huge building for the pupils to live in ; organize no great machinery

for its internal government; invest not your funds in brick and mortar and land, but put up a simple building for school-rooms; place your pupils in good families in the neighbourhood, and devote the interest of the fund to paying their board, and let them be brought daily to the school for instruction.

With all the advantages of the existing institutions for the blind, and for mutes, as they are now organized, — and assuredly those advantages are manifold and great, — they are attended with some serious disadvantages, principally of a moral character. By a different organization, all the former might be secured and most of the latter avoided. The system would be more costly, in a pecuniary point of view, than the present one; so much more, that it will hardly be adopted in our generation. It is suggested, not in a spirit of detraction from the merits and the benefits of our own and of kindred institutions, but in the spirit of the adage which is our motto, *semper aliquid melius*.

Respectfully submitted,

S. G. HOWE.

## ABSTRACT FROM SHOP BOOKS.

INSTITUTION FOR THE BLIND, JAN. 1, 1850.

*Assets.*

|                                                                                       |                   |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------|
| Amount of debts due from individuals, good,                                           | \$ 2,434.22       |
| “ “ stock on hand,                                                                    | 6,034.41          |
| “ “ cash,                                                                             | 195.46            |
| Balance of debit of profit and loss account, for the whole<br>period of the business, | 1,196.49          |
|                                                                                       | <hr/> \$ 9,860.58 |

*Liabilities.*

|                                                                                                                 |                   |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------|
| Amount due to Institution, being the amount originally<br>advanced as a capital for conducting the<br>business, | \$ 4,756.96       |
| “ “ “ individuals,                                                                                              | 5,103.62          |
|                                                                                                                 | <hr/> \$ 9,860.58 |
| The debit of profit and loss account, Jan 1, 1849, was                                                          | \$ 1,399.99       |
| “ “ “ “ Jan. 1, 1850, is                                                                                        | 1,196.49          |
|                                                                                                                 | <hr/>             |
| So that the gain is                                                                                             | \$ 203.50         |

Thirty-six blind persons have been employed during the year, and they have been paid in cash, for their work, the sum of \$ 2,584.48, which is \$ 504.86 more than was paid last year.

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The undersigned, Trustee in behalf of the Commonwealth, having been familiar with the actual condition of the Work Department during five years, as Auditor of Accounts, is happy to confirm the above general statement, and to recommend the establishment as a most efficient means of practical beneficence.

STEPHEN FAIRBANKS, *Trustee.*



## STATEMENT OF WORK DONE IN 1849.

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|                                              |   |   |   |   |   |   |             |
|----------------------------------------------|---|---|---|---|---|---|-------------|
| Hair Mattresses made,                        | . | . | . | . | . | . | 327         |
| Husk " "                                     | . | . | . | . | . | . | 386         |
| Palmleaf " "                                 | . | . | . | . | . | . | 322         |
| Cotton " "                                   | . | . | . | . | . | . | 46          |
| Spring " "                                   | . | . | . | . | . | . | 6           |
| Palliasses made,                             | . | . | . | . | . | . | 24 sets.    |
| Mattresses made over,                        | . | . | . | . | . | . | 749         |
| Pew-cushions " "                             | . | . | . | . | . | . | 32 sets.    |
| Chair-cushions " "                           | . | . | . | . | . | . | 81          |
| Sofas and Couches made over,                 | . | . | . | . | . | . | 49          |
| Comforters made,                             | . | . | . | . | . | . | 274         |
| Sheets made,                                 | . | . | . | . | . | . | 99          |
| Pillow-cases made,                           | . | . | . | . | . | . | 127 pairs.  |
| Bolster Ticks made,                          | . | . | . | . | . | . | 89          |
| Mattress " "                                 | . | . | . | . | . | . | 1,186       |
| Pillow " "                                   | . | . | . | . | . | . | 450         |
| Mattress Tufts made,                         | . | . | . | . | . | . | 40,000      |
| Carpet-bags made,                            | . | . | . | . | . | . | 121         |
| Hair picked,                                 | . | . | . | . | . | . | 37,322 lbs. |
| Palmleaf picked,                             | . | . | . | . | . | . | 6,838 "     |
| Husk " "                                     | . | . | . | . | . | . | 8,558 "     |
| Moss " "                                     | . | . | . | . | . | . | 348 "       |
| Feathers cleansed,                           | . | . | . | . | . | . | 3,950 "     |
| Feather Beds renovated,                      | . | . | . | . | . | . | 155         |
| Mattresses " "                               | . | . | . | . | . | . | 54          |
| Braid for Mats, plaited,                     | . | . | . | . | . | . | 64,910 yds. |
| Mats sewed,                                  | . | . | . | . | . | . | 9,788 feet. |
| Mats wove,                                   | . | . | . | . | . | . | 1,175 "     |
| Chairs seated,                               | . | . | . | . | . | . | 789         |
| Hair spun,                                   | . | . | . | . | . | . | 2,479 lbs.  |
| Pew-cushions made, (say 1,782 running feet,) | . | . | . | . | . | . | 198 sets.   |

## LIST OF BLIND PERSONS

EMPLOYED IN THE WORK DEPARTMENT, AND AMOUNT  
PAID THEM FOR WORK DONE IN THE YEAR 1849.\*

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|                      |   |   |   |   |             |
|----------------------|---|---|---|---|-------------|
| Lyman Smalley,       | . | . | . | . | \$ 166.00   |
| James Johnston,      | . | . | . | . | 76.50       |
| Cyrus Hackett,       | . | . | . | . | 54.72       |
| John Hodge,          | . | . | . | . | 119.76      |
| John Wool,           | . | . | . | . | 166.64      |
| James Montgomery,    | . | . | . | . | 159.36      |
| Hazzard Champlin,    | . | . | . | . | 86.40       |
| Samuel Snow,         | . | . | . | . | 93.52       |
| Daniel Sampson,      | . | . | . | . | 32.40       |
| David Selleg,        | . | . | . | . | 73.04       |
| Charles O'Connor,    | . | . | . | . | 98.96       |
| Lyman Parmenter,     | . | . | . | . | 61.60       |
| Sullivan Anthony,    | . | . | . | . | 74.48       |
| George Nichols,      | . | . | . | . | 8.88        |
| John Pringle,        | . | . | . | . | 97.92       |
| Pliny Morrill,       | . | . | . | . | 115.12      |
| G. W. Whittier,      | . | . | . | . | 52.16       |
| C. S. Twombly,       | . | . | . | . | 38.56       |
| C. M'Cullough,       | . | . | . | . | 24.96       |
| David Devrowe,       | . | . | . | . | 50.88       |
| John Williams,       | . | . | . | . | 120.08      |
| J. B. Worthing,      | . | . | . | . | 61.76       |
| John Daniels,        | . | . | . | . | 13.44       |
| Joseph Blaisdell,    | . | . | . | . | 12.24       |
| J. Crangle,          | . | . | . | . | 5.36        |
| Samuel Libbey,       | . | . | . | . | 2.08        |
| Wilburt Waitt,       | . | . | . | . | 0.96        |
| George Bray,         | . | . | . | . | 2.00        |
| Hannah Bradley,      | . | . | . | . | 71.84       |
| Lydia Blaisdell,     | . | . | . | . | 65.68       |
| Margaret B. Teague,  | . | . | . | . | 79.20       |
| Mary J. Patten,      | . | . | . | . | 58.24       |
| Mary Chick,          | . | . | . | . | 40.00       |
| A. Lovejoy,          | . | . | . | . | 36.73       |
| M. J. Fletcher,      | . | . | . | . | 13.76       |
| I. W. Patten, Agent, | . | . | . | . | 349.25      |
|                      |   |   |   |   | <hr/>       |
|                      |   |   |   |   | \$ 2,584.48 |

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\* Some worked but a very short time, as will be seen by the amount paid them.

## APPENDIX B.

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### EXTRACT FROM DR. HOWE'S REPORT ON LAURA BRIDGMAN.

It has not been thought necessary to publish every year an account of the mode of instruction pursued with Laura, because there has been no material change from that formerly pursued, and already published. There has been only an application of the same principles of instruction to higher subjects of study. Besides, the great point of interest was the beginning of the process. With her it was the first step that was most difficult and most interesting. When, in the stillness and darkness amid which she was so utterly lost to human fellowship, she began fairly to comprehend and to use arbitrary language, then she got hold of a thread by which her mind could be guided out into the light; she has held on to it firmly, and followed it eagerly, and come out into a world which has been made to her one of joy and gladness by the general welcome with which she has been greeted.

Her progress has been a curious and an interesting spectacle. She has come into human society with a sort of triumphal march; her course has been a perpetual ovation. Thousands have been watching

her with eager eyes, and applauding each successful step, while she, all unconscious of their gaze, holding on to the slender thread, and feeling her way along, has advanced with faith and courage towards those who awaited her with trembling hope. Nothing shows more than her case the importance which, despite their useless waste of human life and human capacity, men really attach to a human soul. They owe to her something for furnishing an opportunity of showing how much of goodness there is in them; for surely the way in which she has been regarded is creditable to humanity. Perhaps there are not three living women whose names are more widely known than hers; and there is not one who has excited so much sympathy and interest. There are thousands of women in the world who are striving to attract its notice and gain its admiration, — some by the natural magic of beauty and grace, some by the high nobility of talent, some by the lower nobility of rank and title, some by the vulgar show of wealth; but none of them has done it so effectually as this poor blind, deaf, and dumb girl, by the silent show of her misfortunes, and her successful efforts to surmount them.

The treatment she has received shows something of Human Progress too; for the time was when a child, bereaved of senses as she is, would have been regarded as a monster, and treated as a burden and a curse, even among the most civilized people of the world; — she would, perhaps, have been thrown into the river, or exposed upon the mountain to wild beasts. But now there are millions of people by whom it is recognized as a duty, and esteemed

as a privilege, to protect and cherish her, or any one in the like situation.

There is something, perhaps, in the rarity of such cases of manifold bereavement, — something in the fact, that she is the first person who ever came out of such a dark and silent prison to tell us plainly of its condition, — something of pride in the proof which she gives of the native power of the human soul; but still, bating all this, the amount of tender sympathy in her misfortunes, and of real interest in the attempt to lighten them, which has been shown by thousands of sensitive hearts, is most gratifying to reflect upon.

Every thing that has been printed here respecting her has been reprinted in England; and translations have been made into the Continental languages; so that Laura, without any other claim to notice than the weight of her misfortunes and the effort made to lighten them, enjoys almost a world-wide renown.

There will yet, perhaps, be found for her a biographer who has the qualifications necessary to gather from her story the abundant materials which it furnishes to illustrate many curious mental phenomena, and to draw from it the many beautiful moral lessons which it may be made to teach. Whatever I have written or may write can be regarded only as *mémoires pour servir*.\*

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\* My learned friend, Professor Lieber, whose truly philosophic mind saw at once the important light which her case might afford upon many psychological questions, has paid great attention to it. He has written a most interesting memoir upon the vocal sounds which she utters. This will be published in the Annals of the Smithsonian Institute.



At the period when the last mention was made of her in our Annual Report, she had gained a sufficient knowledge of language to converse freely, by means of the finger alphabet, on all topics which would be understood by girls generally of twelve years old. She had begun to come into relation with a variety of persons; with the teachers and pupils in the school for the blind, all of whom could converse rapidly and easily with her. She had become intimate with several instructed deaf mutes; and had formed quite an extensive circle of acquaintance, with ladies for the most part, who had taken pains to learn the manual alphabet, and with whom she was very fond of talking.

These influences were found to be favorable to the development of her character, and she was left to them. I thought it better to pursue this course than keep her as strictly under the influence of her teacher's mind as she had been in the early period of her instruction. She needed, however, and has continued to have, special instruction. Miss Sarah Wight has continued to give all her time and attention to her education. She has been to her a constant companion, friend, teacher, and exemplar. She has devoted herself to Laura for years, by day and by night, in health and in sickness, in joy and in sorrow, with zeal, patience, and discretion, and has had a wholesome influence upon her mind, heart, and character.

I can claim no other credit for the improvement which Laura has made in latter years, than that of securing for her such a teacher. If she is shortcoming of any natural qualification for the task she

undertook, at my urgent request, I can only say, on the other hand, it would be very hard to find any one who possesses so many natural and acquired qualifications for so novel and arduous an undertaking. Her success has been great. She has done far better than I could have done. Her gentleness and equanimity of temper have tended to keep her pupil in that happy mean between excesses of feeling, to which persons of her temperament are constitutionally disposed.

Laura loves her and respects her, and makes no severer criticism upon her than the playful one in the following extract from her little diary : —

“ I had a very pleasant day. I have been very hilarious. I could not help laughing incessantly. My mind is so very full of drollery and mirthfulness. *I wish that my dear teacher would have a little share of my mirthfulness.* She does not like fun as well as I do. I love fun so much.

“ As I was very busily engaged at eleven o’clock, I was agreeably interrupted by some circumstances which occurred so unexpectedly. It was [the entrance of] one of my very dear friends Miss E. R. the sister of my old teacher. She took my dirty right hand, greeting me very warmly — who wore gloves.

“ I asked her how she liked our Sunny Home, she said she admired it very much. She surveyed it with much interest. She asked me whose the bouquet of flowers were. I assuredly told her, that they belonged to Miss W. She returned that they smelt very fragrantly and delicious. E. altered her mind at length as she could not stay as long as she [had] hoped.

The words included between brackets are added ; the rest is an exact copy, *punctuatim et literatim*, from her diary, which she writes in a legible hand.

Her health has not been uniformly good, and there have been times when we were alarmed about her. She lost her appetite, pined away, and became very

feeble, though her spirits did not flag; she bore up bravely, recovered, and became again strong, active, and buoyant with animal spirits and gayety.

She is fond of exercise in the open air, and walks from four to six miles daily, besides taking care of her room, and occupying herself about the house. Her diet is spare and simple. She eats rather to satisfy hunger than to tickle her palate.

Her life is very uniform. This is found to be necessary, because departure from her usual habits causes excitement, which is sometimes injurious.

She is a light sleeper, and wakes at an early hour. Her capacity for perceiving the lapse of time seems uncommonly good, and, with the aid of certain regularly occurring events, enables her to ascertain pretty accurately the hour. For instance, she often perceives, by a slight vibration of the floor and walls, when any of the domestics are astir, and she rises immediately. She then takes her bath, arranges her hair very neatly, and with much care, for the day, puts on a common dress, and proceeds to put her room in order. Not a scrap of paper, not a particle of dirt escapes her notice. She puts up every book in the case, places the furniture in order, and makes every thing tidy. If she completes this task before it is time to go to breakfast, she sits down and sews diligently during the few moments there may be to spare.

At the table, she helps herself to her food, and manages her fork and spoon very dexterously. She eats moderately and with great deliberation, sitting a long while at her meals, and never likes to be hurried. She loves to have some one within reach with whom she can occasionally exchange words.

After breakfast her teacher reads to her a portion of the Scriptures, and then takes a sort of review of her conduct and actions the day before, making such remarks in commendation or criticism as may be desirable. Her diary is then examined, and criticized. Her letters also are examined, (for she has many correspondents,) to see if they are legibly written.

She is aware that the countenance is an index of the state of the mind, and that the expression of her own changes with varying conditions of bodily or mental well-being; hence, after this morning self-examination, she sometimes asks her teacher what her countenance expresses.

Her lessons now begin, and continue through the morning simultaneously with the lessons for the classes in the Institution, being each three quarters of an hour, with a recess of a quarter of an hour between them.

At this time she is studying algebra, geography, and history. She is very intent upon her lessons; she continually asks questions upon various subjects connected with them, and is willing at any time to forego a recess rather than break off.

She is acquiring a fondness for works of fancy, the nature of which she begins to understand. She is at this time much interested in "The Neighbours," which her teacher is reading to her.

The lessons over, she dresses for dinner. She is careful and painstaking with her toilette, but never in a fluster. She is considerate about her appearance, but never anxious. She is fond of dress, but, with a tact that seems incomprehensible, she avoids

every thing gaudy, odd, or in bad taste. There may be, and probably is, some thought with her about the impression which her appearance makes upon others, — something of that natural and proper desire which women have of improving the gifts of grace and beauty, — but she is hardly conscious of it. She would dress herself just as neatly and tastefully as usual in the morning, if she were sure that no one would see her during the day. Indeed, what to her is seeing, — she who lives in total darkness, and comprehends not what light is? The direct and instant motive with her is the gratification of a natural love of order, and sense of ideality, which have been cultivated until such gratification has become a necessity.

It is difficult to forego the pleasure of dwelling upon this pleasing trait, — this love of beauty for beauty's sake, — this lesser but essential virtue of the female character, without which other charms have no lasting power. The love of being graceful and beautiful is not an offshoot of selfish vanity; it is not a weed springing up in the shallow soil of artificial society, and which can live only in the light of the human eye; it is a plant whose roots are far down in the depths of the human heart, and it can be made to grow, and bear goodly fruits, even in the darkness and stillness of an isolation as great as that in which Laura lives.

But to return to the simple story of her usual daily occupation. She takes dinner at one o'clock, at the table with the blind, and generally contrives to exchange words frequently with whoever is sitting within her reach. She eats as sparingly and slowly



at dinner as at breakfast ; indeed, she is always a “dainty eater.”

After dinner she takes her work and sews, or knits, or makes purses, bags, or chains, as the case may be, and works very busily and very neatly. She is a good needle-woman, and is very expert and dexterous at making various articles of female handicraft. If her teacher, or any one of her friends, sits within her reach, she frequently holds out her hand to exchange a word ; but, notwithstanding this interruption, she is so diligent and nimble at her work, that she performs a good task.

This over, she goes out to walk with her teacher, and spends two or three hours in exercise, either taking a long stroll into the country, or through the streets. Sometimes she takes a few pennies or some fruit, and requests her teacher to give them to any poor woman or child she may meet. She is fond of going into town “shopping.” She is expert at examining patterns, and chaffering about bargains, though she is too guileless to think of “beating down” the seller.

She takes this time to make calls upon her friends and acquaintance, of whom she has many. She gossips good-naturedly about every-day trifles, and gravely about the weightier matters of births, deaths, and marriages. Of what is called “scandal,” she is still in blessed ignorance. She must feel of any new caps or bonnets, examine any new dresses or ornaments, and note any novelty in the fashion thereof. She must greet all the guests, make them all shake hands with her teacher, fondle the children, and dandle the baby. Such intercourse gives

her great pleasure and some profit, and would give her more, were it not that most people reverse the ordinary rule, and desire to have her talk, rather than to talk themselves. In intercourse with others, they wish to give all and take nothing; with her, they incline to take all and give nothing. This is not fair, and is not profitable to Laura. In the commerce of ideas at least, there should be free trade and entire reciprocity, else half its benefits are lost.

She returns home to supper, after which she writes in her diary, or attends to some correspondence, for an hour or so. She then takes her work and occupies herself busily. She seems perfectly cheerful when by herself and unnoticed; she is better pleased, however, to have any one sit near her, even if they do not speak together. But she is most happy when her teacher sits within her reach, so that she can occasionally exchange a word and a laugh with her, and, when any emotion arises, can throw her arms around her neck and kiss her, which she often does, in the most earnest and touching manner. Usually, however, she is interrupted in the evening by some "callers"; — a neighbour, one of the blind scholars, or a domestic.

She receives every one, however simple or humble, with an earnest welcome, and busies herself equally for all in getting them seats, and seeing that they are pleasantly occupied.

A humble domestic sometimes comes up to take lessons in reading, which Miss Wight is kind enough to give her, and Laura is as glad to meet her, and as ready and happy to aid her, as though she were the richest lady in the land.

She retires to bed at nine o'clock, as a matter of habit and of duty, but never from a sense of drowsiness, for she never seems sleepy. She is wide awake, bright, and cheerful, to the last.

Sunday brings some change. Her work is laid aside, and her regular lessons are omitted. But the day brings no gloom or austerity. She regards it as a pleasant day, — a day of relaxation from ordinary labor, — a day devoted more than others to thoughtful self-communion; to a consideration and enjoyment of the blessings and pleasures of life; to social relations, and duties, and joys. She would no more think of suppressing a hearty laugh, or repressing any outbreak of mirthfulness, on Sunday, than on any other day; it is truly a day of thanksgiving, and surely the most acceptable worship that she or any one can pay is that of a glad and grateful heart.

This reminds me that upon one of the visits of Governor Briggs, just after he had issued a proclamation for the annual "Fast Day," Laura asked him earnestly why he did not rather make a proclamation for two Thanksgiving Days in the year, rather than for a Thanksgiving in the autumn, and a Fast in the spring.

On Sunday she writes letters to her relatives and friends. She takes great interest in her brothers, particularly in the youngest, who is still a boy at school. She writes him long letters, filled with kind and good advice, touching his health, and his improvement in his studies, and his conduct generally. Such is the daily course of her life, which is seldom interrupted.

It may seem strange to some to hear of a girl

who is blind, and deaf, and dumb, and shorn of half the other senses, being cheerful, and even gay and frolicsome. Nevertheless, so it is. There are few persons so light-hearted, so cheery, so full of mirth, so ready at any moment to laugh at a joke, or join in a game at romps, as Laura Bridgman.

But what is her idea of fun? Precisely that of any other young person who has a like mental constitution, — who has the sentiment or the disposition to mirthfulness. Given this natural disposition, and the opportunities for its gratification are found in any circumstances of life. The intellect has nothing to do with it. There need be no *thought* or *idea* about it; the sentiment or disposition will manifest itself somehow, irrespective of circumstances, and even in spite of circumstances. It leads one to laugh, as it seems to others, ill-timedly, and to say, “Well, I could not help it; I should have laughed if I had had to die for it.”

Laura by nature has this disposition so strong, that her infirmities cannot repress it. Her education has never tended to lessen it; on the contrary, I have always tried to draw it out and to increase and strengthen it. It is a gift of God, precious indeed to any one, but to her beyond all price, because it gives what men could never give her, though they should pour the wealth of the world into her lap, and place its sceptre in her hands.

But be the philosophy of the matter what it may, Laura has a sprightly, cheerful disposition, and is given to merriment and hilarity. When she is in good health, and surrounded by her friends, her disposition manifests itself plainly in all her natural

language. Smiles accompany every word and action; her spirits animate her, and make her lively in her looks and movements; the slightest manifestation of mirthfulness in others excites it in her instantly; she catches their good-humor by a sort of instinct, almost as quickly as we catch it in their smiles; she laughs at their pleasant remarks; she is ready to join them in any merriment; she makes some extravagant comparison, or some burlesque upon their words, and then bursts into laughter. It is with her as with others of the like disposition, — the occasion does not create the cheerfulness, but the cheerfulness creates the occasion. Sometimes when sitting alone, sewing or communing with herself, a merry thought comes over her, and makes her laugh aloud; or if she is crossing the room, and stumbles over a chair, she laughs, and calls herself “very blind.”

Natural cheerfulness, however, though it is an essential part of the character, and can hardly be obscured, — though it illumines the pathway of life from the cradle to the grave, and breaks through the thickest clouds of sorrow and adversity, — nevertheless manifests itself in different moods in different stages of our progress; the merry laugh of the boy is gradually softened into the cheerful smile of the old man.

I have spoken of Laura rather as she has been during the time since she was last mentioned, than as she actually is; for now, as she increases in years, the flowing tide of animal spirits subsides a little; the swelling waves of joy are seen, but they break not so often into boisterous mirth. Without



being less cheerful and happy, she is in her usual mode more quiet and subdued. Life is to her a boon, and she so considers it, for often, in the fulness of her heart, she says, — “ *I am so glad I have been created !* ”

Her pleasures are of the simplest kind, and taken regularly, and therefore never pall upon the sense. She has not any of that moral intemperance which so often destroys happiness, — the thirst for excitement, the wish for pressing the joys of years into one day, and drinking the whole at a draught, leaving the lees of satiety, perhaps of repentance and sorrow, as the portion of the future. A gleam of sunshine upon her face, a warm south wind, the soft grass under her feet, a growing plant, or an opening flower, — any of these things awaken a feeling of pleasure, and often lead her thoughts up to Him who created them. Her lessons afford her continual pleasure. The simple portions of knowledge, — her mind’s daily bread, — are earned by labor, which gives a relish to the homeliest morsel of truth.

Then there are her pure affections, still more abundant springs of enjoyment, from which the deepest draught can produce no moral intoxication. She loves her friends tenderly and indulgently. She never forgets them, but speaks of those whom she has not met for years with earnest interest. To their virtues and praises she is ever sensible; to their faults and their detractions she is indeed blind and deaf. Few persons are less exacting in their requirements, and less censorious in their judgment, respecting their friends and acquaintance, than she

is. Indeed, I do not recollect ever hearing her speak censoriously or unkindly of any person. Miss Wight mentions in her journal, that Laura has occasionally spoken of the faults of some of her friends with sorrow, but not in a detracting spirit.

Miss Wight, in her journal, observes, very properly, that

“ There is one thing that seems worthy of remark about Laura, the affection which every body has for her here in the house, where the novelty has worn off, and where, from her love of conversation, she sometimes taxes severely the time and patience of her favorites. But every body loves her. As Sophia said yesterday, ‘ She is so good they can’t help it.’ And she *is* good to every one, — and whoever comes here, be it Mrs. G——, or the F——s, or S—— B——, she exerts herself to her utmost to make them happy. Sometimes a dozen little girls will crowd round her while she is writing, shaking the table, and pushing her arm, and interrupting her to try their powers of saying a few words with their fingers, all of which she will bear patiently, and is always glad when they come to see her.”

It is most remarkable that she has not become very selfish, and inconsiderate of others, because she has necessarily been in the less blessed situation of receiver, and seldom in that of giver, of favors and kindnesses. This will often cause the seeds of many virtues to perish in the young mind. But though Laura may have suffered from this cause, she has not become selfish or inconsiderate of others. In the words of Miss Wight, “ she is never as happy as when she is able to do something for the comfort and happiness of others, more especially if they are sick and suffering.” Perhaps this is a strong expression, but if it cannot be taken in a literal

sense, I, and many others, can testify to the readiness and eagerness with which Laura attempts to show her sympathy with any suffering, and to do something to lessen it.

It has ever been a subject of anxiety with me to have her furnished with opportunities of exercising these virtuous dispositions in the various offices of charity and love, knowing well that they need exercise, just as much as do the mental faculties. A man may as well expect that he can come to understand the *Mécanique Céleste* without early exercise of his mathematical powers, as expect to comprehend fully the Sermon on the Mount without previous training of his feelings of charity and love by actual exercise of them.

He who should propose to become a great mathematician by beginning his studies after his life is almost spent, would be called mad; but he who proposes to spend threescore years in the pursuit of mere pleasure or fortune, and then begin the *practice* of virtue, so as to die a saintly Christian at threescore and ten, finds so many to keep him company that his sanity is not doubted.

Laura's sympathy is ever ready to flow for those who are afflicted. She lately wrote, of her own accord, the following letter to a lady who had lost an only child.

“Sept. 28, 1849.

“MY DEAR MRS. L. : —

“I was very much surprised to hear of the decease of your darling, last Tuesday. I hoped that she would recover very soon. I trust that your little Mary is much happier at her new home than she was on the earth. I am very positive God, and his beloved Son Christ, will educate your child much bet-

ter than men could in this world. I can scarcely realize that the school is so excessively beautiful in heaven. I can sympathize with you in your great affliction. I cannot help thinking of your trouble and little Mary's illness. I know very certainly that God will promote her happiness for ever. I loved her very dearly, as if she were my own daughter. I shall miss her very much every time I come to see you. I send my best love to you and a kiss. I am very sad for you. Yours, &c. L. B."

It will be seen that she uses language which seems to imply considerable religious instruction, but it would not be fair to suffer such inference to be drawn, because she has not received what is usually considered religious instruction; that is, she has not been indoctrinated into any particular creed or form of religious belief. Faith she has in God, ay! and love, too,—that love which casteth out fear. Her veneration, which showed itself spontaneously, has been so directed upward to the Creator and Governor of all things, that she lives in consciousness of his protecting presence and loving care. His laws are his angelic messengers, ever hovering over us,—not armed with whips and scorpions, to avenge themselves, but charged to win us upward by love and persuasion. Laura begins to understand and revere those laws, and thus her religious nature is developed without the aid of catechism. More than once it has been seen that the thought of God's presence and love, occurring in moments of irritation and discontent, has soothed her into placid peace and content. She often says, with a joyful and loving look, "our Father gives us all these things."

In childhood, while her mind was beginning to grow up towards the light of knowledge, and to put

forth its timid tendrils to twine around some points of belief, which should be its support through its after growth, then I wished that those tendrils should cling only to what was firm and durable. I tried to keep out of her reach all pestilent catchwords and sectarian shibboleths. I tried to train her up according to what seemed to me the will of her Creator, whether written in a book or manifested in nature ; but I did not care that she should know too early the name which men give to their notions of his attributes, whether it be Jove, Jehovah, or God. Having full faith in the religious nature of man, I could no more doubt that, with the growth of her mind, the religious capacities and dispositions would show themselves, than I could doubt that an acorn I had planted would grow to be an oak rather than a hemlock. I was not anxious to pull it up to look at its roots, or to twist and bend its twigs that it might grow in any particular form. I wished to encourage in her the growth of those virtues which seem to be the elements out of which the religious character is afterwards formed,—veneration, trust, and love ; conscientiousness, ideality, hope, and the like. As for the particular form of belief which she should adopt, I had less care.

I supposed that when, by the action of her perceptive faculties, her acquaintance with facts should become sufficiently extensive, then her mind would begin to put forth its higher powers, and generalize the knowledge that had been furnished to it. I wished to avoid the common error of giving a creed first, and the elements out of which faith ought to



be formed afterwards, when the form of belief was fixed. I trusted that the free elements of thought would crystallize around certain natural points of belief, and I did not care to hasten the process by introducing any artificial nucleus to give special form to the future faith. Nor was my trust disappointed. It was a source of the highest satisfaction and pleasure to find, that, as causality began to work, these inferences were formed naturally: — Women make bread, and clothes, and the like; men make tables, and chairs, and desks, and houses; but no woman nor man makes the sun to shine, the rain to fall, the grass to grow; *therefore* there must be a superhuman power. I do not mean to say that, at any particular time, and in any concrete form, she stated this inference; but I do say, that, to the best of my knowledge and belief, her mind passed through this process, and underwent these changes; that no one directly aided its progress, or shaped the form of her belief, but that alone and unguided she sought God, and found him in the Creator.

It was a touching and beautiful sight to see this young soul, that had lain so long in utter darkness and stillness, as soon as the obstacles were cleared from its path, begin to move forward and upward, to seek and to own its Creator, God! It was as if the lost Pleiad, brought back again to her native sphere, and under her native influences, should begin to move onward with graceful sweep, and, joining her sister stars, renew her circling homage around the central throne of light. Her intellect had done part of its work; it had brought God to her mind.

It would have been most interesting to watch the

further progress of her mental development ; to see, as her moral nature began to be active, with what moral attributes she would clothe the Creator, whose existence she had, as it were, discovered.

I should have been willing to bear the clamorous reprobation that was already beginning to rise from those who considered me as standing between her and what they called religion, and thus perilling her soul, because my faith in the correctness of my principles was as firm as theirs in their own, and my interest in Laura's well-being not less than theirs. I had, moreover, the full permission of Laura's parents to do as I thought best in the education of her who had become in some sense my child. But circumstances arose which obliged me to confide her to the care of others. She has had the guidance of an intelligent and virtuous woman, who has an earnest religious nature, without any bigoted attachment to the outward form in which the religious nature of other persons happens to manifest itself. It will be seen by Laura's manner of writing and talking, that she has adopted notions common to Liberal Christians, though I must say they are not more definite or firm than those of most young persons.

Conversing one day lately about a friend who had gone far away, Laura said, "How glad I am that our minds are made to go thousands of miles away, to see our friends, and be with them, though they are so remote!" She sat reflecting a moment, and then said, "Will our minds be alike when they go to heaven, away from our bodies?" meaning, Will they be like in their powers to what they are now?

The answer was, Probably they will be. She then added, "I have been thinking how powerful God is. How hard it is to think God has lived for ever. If we were all alike we could not know each other. I think we shall know our friends much better than we do here" (meaning in heaven). "But I have not naturally much trust and confidence in God; Christ had the most confidence in God, he was willing to be killed. Do you think Christ feels like himself now in heaven? Do we think as much of our only Father as we ought to? Does it not give you more love in your heart to think much of Him? It does me." After a pause she asked, "Should you like to live here as long as we live?" — meaning, to live for ever in this world. The answer was, I am contented and happy here now; to which she rejoined, with much emphasis, "So am I!" This is human nature, alike in the richest prince and poorest peasant. The dying Medici murmured to the priest who pictured the splendors of the heavenly mansion he was about to enter, — "But I should have been content with the Pitti Palace"; and Laura would not willingly leave a world, to the outward beauties and harmonies of which she is blind and deaf, for any paradise that can be painted to her. She now has faculties for comprehending, and capacities for enjoying, this part of heaven; she has none for the other. It would not be hard to make this world a vale of tears to her, or torture her into a desire to leave it; but at present she is grateful for the boon of existence, and happy in its enjoyment. By and by, when, by retrospection, she can understand what progress is, — when she has made all she can here, —

then, perhaps, she will more willingly spread the pinions of her soul, and soar to higher states of existence.

She sometimes gives moral and religious advice to persons who are in every way her superiors in mind, with a beautiful simplicity. In a letter to Mrs. Farnham, who was going on a mission of good to California, she wrote: — “I hope you will be very happy and useful and loving and kind always: and also that you will have reverence and respect for all human beings. I feel in my heart that you will strive to do the duty for God, and it will please Him so much to see you doing the most good to all in the world. I shall wish to hear of your happiness, and the country, &c. so much! You must think of me and ask for my [his?] sympathy and confidence when you are troubled and homesick in mind and heart. You must not think I shall forget you in my life, if I do not write to you frequently,” &c.

It may surprise some, who know how many years have been spent in teaching language to Laura, and who read the foregoing specimens of her speech and writing, to hear that much of the labor, even of the last two years, has been upon language, and that her knowledge of it is yet so very imperfect, as to be a great stumbling-block in the way of her progress. Much has been said upon this subject in connection with her history, but I can never recur to that history without perceiving that its most interesting phenomena are so closely connected with the phenomena of the development of language, that they can hardly be considered apart. Her life and experience will be useful, in various ways, to those engaged in instruction, but in none, perhaps, more

than by throwing light upon the subject of language, — the mode in which it is learned, and its importance in the development of the intellect.

Language is important to her, and indeed to all of us, not merely as a vestment to the mind and an instrument of the thought, but important to the moral as well as the intellectual nature. It is not an outright gift from God, to be used or abused, cultivated or neglected, at man's will or whim, but, like all his precious gifts, it is in the nature of a trust, limited by conditions, and attended with responsibilities. These conditions and responsibilities are too often violated and neglected; hence men not only fail to reap all the profits from the use of the trust, but incur the penalties of its abuse. For instance, a great mind generates a great thought, such as those of common strength could neither conceive nor give birth to; he embodies it in words, and sends it forth upon the wings of language for the use of humanity. Without such embodiment it would be worthless to every one but himself, and even with it is useless to those who, having ears to hear, do not understand. The number of those who hear without comprehending is very great, — greater, sometimes, than those who hear and understand also. Nay, it may be said, with regard even to some of the most precious words of wisdom, that they are comprehended by very few in each generation of those who repeat them over as familiarly as household words. This is often a source of loss, if not of evil. Children hear the words of some sentence which embodies a great truth; they repeat it over as they grow up, they assent to it, they seem to believe it,



and yet never fully comprehend it in all its bearings. This is true even of simple propositions asserting concrete truths. For instance, "The earth revolves upon its axis, and around the sun." Many learn this at school, repeat it over ever afterwards, believe it all their lives, and seem to understand it, but form no adequate conception of its meaning. Many die without ever seeing with the mind's eye the bulky globe suspended in space, spinning swiftly around, now in the sunlight, now in the darkness, with its broad continents and towering mountains standing steadfast in their places, and the great ocean bulging out on either side, while the whole rushes forward on its circuit, steering its way among other globes, to come back in a year to precisely the same place from which it started, without having swerved from the path it was bidden to follow. How few there are who, if lifted off the earth and shown the magnificent spectacle, would not exclaim, that they never before comprehended the meaning of the words they had so often uttered, — "The earth revolves upon its axis, and around the sun." We all know the earth is round, but how many there are, who, if asked which way China lies, would point to the east, rather than down between their legs! How few school-committee men think an artificial globe necessary, and how much fewer are those who would allow a master to take his class to the top of a hill or spire, to point out the coast and islands, mountains and rivers!

Propositions like the above, concerning the globe, are simple indeed, compared with thousands to which men give unhesitating assent, without the capacity of comprehending them. Some are simple proposi-

tions, touching mere doctrine, and comparatively unimportant, as, God is three, or God is one; but there are others which are accepted just as readily, though they involve abstract principles upon which depend all the great doctrines of morality and religion. These are learned by rote, and repeated over without being understood or felt, until they become dogmas, articles of faith, to which men cling as pagans cling to their idols. Hence the force of the satire, that some men will write for religion, fight for religion, die for religion,—do any thing but live for religion. It is only now and then that a man of inquiring spirit strips off the husks of words that cover the kernel of truth. Others are brought to feel the depth and force of what before were unmeaning words by some personal experience, which brings it home to their bosoms. For instance, a man who was taught to lisp the Lord's Prayer from early infancy, may repeat it over every day,—may seem to feel, comprehend, and accept the sublime doctrine of forgiveness there taught;—he thinks he can forgive any injury. But let there come suddenly upon him one of those terrible wrongs which pierce the soul with a sharper pang than death of parent, child, or lover, and then let him pronounce the words, "Forgive us our trespasses *as we forgive those who trespass against us,*" and he will falter; he will hesitate to ask God to mete out to him *only* that measure of forgiveness which he metes out to the offender against himself; and the Amen! will stick in his throat. It never stuck in Macbeth's, until the full force and meaning of the "God bless us!" which he had used all his life, was suddenly brought home to him by the fell deed he had just done.

Precepts given before they can be comprehended are apt to degenerate into lifeless and unmeaning dogmas ; and it was partly to prevent their doing so that I deferred so long this part of her instruction. It would be absurd, of course, to push the doctrine to its extreme, and never impart an idea beyond the full comprehension of a child, but it is not absurd to keep the doctrine in view.

She was early taught that words must come to her as things bringing some meaning ; if they do not show it at once, she challenges them and bids them answer. She will not go over the first chapter of a book, without stopping you at every verse. Tell her God created the world in some way that mortal cannot comprehend, and she lets it pass. Tell her that he created it out of nothing, and she cries, "How can that be ? what is nothing ?" When told he did it in six days, she simply exclaimed, "How industrious he must have been !" Other children have their capacity for receiving statements so early and enormously developed, that any doctrine is received easily ; but Laura, beginning later, strains at gnats while they swallow camels. Of her own accord, she challenged doctrines that she would doubtless have embraced unwittingly if she had been taught in the common way ; to say nothing of certain doctrines and dogmas, the piquancy and force of her objections to which might give offence if published. Take, for instance, her view of capital punishment, when first explained to her. The eye for an eye, and the tooth for a tooth, and the precept, "Whoso sheddeth man's blood, by man shall his blood be shed," and the like, had not prepared her for it ; the usual

process had been reversed ; she had learned the doctrines of the Sermon on the Mount before those of the old dispensation. Hence, she was shocked at the idea of putting a man to death, and taking a second life because one had already been lost, — punishing a man instead of forgiving him, — doing him harm instead of doing him good ! The manner in which she expressed thoughts, as they first came into her mind, has already been related.

She had been guarded in some measure from the error into which most of us fall, but to which children and uninstructed persons are especially prone, — that of misunderstanding and perverting the true meaning of words. We are apt to use connotative terms without any precise idea of the connotation ; we are satisfied if a word denotes the thing or subject of which we speak, without any definite notion of the attributes connoted by it. Children must, of course, rest satisfied at first with that part of the meaning of words which denotes the particular object of their thought ; but they should be taught early to distinguish the attributes connoted by the word ; that is, learn what qualities or conditions in the object are implied by its name. The omission of this exercise in the training of children is common, and it is fatal in most cases to all hopes of attaining precision and accuracy of language, because persons rarely learn to correct the fault afterward ; and its consequences are felt by them in various ways, and often result in great mischief to individuals and to society.

A word of explanation may not be amiss, because it illustrates the mode of teaching Laura in the

beginning of her course. Little children amuse and train themselves by attaching names, as labels, to things, repeating them over and over and ringing changes upon them. There is little thought about it; it is merely a playful exercise of the mind, and yet the process is a very important one. They do not notice, at first, the attributes or qualities that go to make up the thing. They seize upon the general outline, or whole group of attributes, and utter some sound which is to them a name; or, if they hear us give a name to it, they instantly imitate us; they hang on a label as like ours as they can make it, no matter whether it is good or bad. For instance, we say *dog*, and a Frenchman says *chien*, and the child adopts either with equal readiness, because there is just as much fitness in the one name as in the other. But if our vocal sign bear any resemblance to any peculiarity about the beast, — as *bow-wow*! — the meaning of that sign is more quickly perceived; the imitation of it is more readily made; and if the child happen to hear the dog bark, the connection between the sound and the animal becomes indelibly impressed upon his mind. He hangs the label on to the right object at once, and never forgets where it belongs. “Bow-wow!” “baa! baa!” “quack! quack!” are natural and good labels, more easily learned, more easily comprehended, and more firmly retained, than “dog,” “sheep,” and “duck,” — comprehended, too, the world over.

The next animal, however, that the child sees going upon four legs, bearing however remote likeness to the first, be it a bear, a sheep, or a calf, revives the impression made upon his mind by the



dog, and he instantly produces its label, and, tacking it on to the creature, cries, "Bow-bow!" He has not yet learned what are the peculiar attributes connoted by the arbitrary word *dog*, or by his own more natural name, *bow-bow*! Little by little, he perceives that there are peculiarities about other animals, and notes the most striking of these, — the horns, for instance, or the shaggy fur, — and he then requires a sign-word or a label for each one of them, and makes one, or takes one used by others, as cow, bear, and the like. He learns, however, very slowly, perceiving only the most striking attributes of the object; he at first mistakes a wolf or a fox for a dog; and even after he has ceased to do this, he has yet more to learn about the thing signified by the word *dog*. He must become acquainted with poodles, terriers, spaniels, hounds, bull-dogs, lap-dogs, water-dogs, and all the varieties of the species, before he understands the most striking attributes connoted by the term *dog*; nor does he yet comprehend the whole of the connotation, unless he knows the habits of the animal and its anatomical and other peculiarities. It may seem pushing the figure too far to say, that few men comprehend fully, if any do, the whole meaning and connotation of the word *dog*; nevertheless, it is in some sense strictly true. A man may own packs of them, and not know the whole meaning and connotation of the word, unless he has paid uncommon attention to the natural history of the animal.

In view of the principle above alluded to, the teacher should train children as much as is possible to observe carefully, not only what objects are denoted by names, but what attributes are connoted

also. This, however, is rarely done, and most of us grow up with very vague and imperfect notions of what is meant by the words we use. Children at first care only to obtain names for whatever presents itself to their senses in the concrete, — a stone, a house, a tree; and of these they seize only upon the most obvious appearances,— the hardness, the structure, or the foliage. They do not note the weight and texture of the first, the structure and plan of the second, or the growth and functions of the third. They gradually acquire vague notions of the attributes of an object, so far as they are presented in the concrete, but it is rarely that they come to think about all that is implied by the abstract terms *weight*, *structure*, and *function*. Nay, few grown people ask themselves what is implied by what seem concrete terms, but which are really abstract terms, such as *size*, *weight*, *smell*, &c.; and if they should be required to define such words as *fault*, *virtue*, *affection*, they would have to resort to an extensive circumlocution, and probably finish by giving an example instead of a definition. Such persons, talking with Laura in the early part of her studies, and running on glibly with what seemed to them the easiest and simplest words, used to be astonished at her stopping them to ask, What do you mean by *virtue*? What is *quiet*? What is *solemn*? Their amazement, however, was not equal to hers, at finding they could not explain the words they had been using.

Any one who has had dealings with the world, and has thought upon the subject of language, will see how this vagueness of people's ideas about the meaning of the words they use becomes the source

of misunderstanding and mischief without end. To say nothing of the intentional double-dealing of all, from the Pythoness at Delphi, to the pettifogger everywhere, who purposely keep the word of promise to the ear, while they break it to the hope, — what wars and fightings among nations, what disputes and quarrels among individuals, what polemics among divines, what protocols among statesmen, what speeches and fees among lawyers, might have been saved to the world, if certain words, written down hastily, had been clearly understood by the writers and by the readers !

Why is it so notoriously difficult for a man to give clear instructions to an agent, to draw up a contract, or even to write his own will, so that his wishes and his meaning shall be clearly understood, when he is not by to explain it ? Partly because his ideas of the meaning of language are so vague, that, as soon as he has written down one word, he is obliged to write down others in order to explain its meaning ; to re-affirm the same thing in another way, forgetting that, the more he writes, the more room he leaves for doubt, — the more he extends his flanks, the more he weakens his centre.

It may be the same with the will and testament of a generation, expressed in the form of a constitution. The hands that deliberately wrote it are scarcely cold, before people are quarrelling about its meaning. What a satire upon language is the fact, that the ablest men in our day and generation are employed in trying to teach the people to read understandingly, and succeed with only a few at the head of the class ! If our fathers had written

down, with Decalogue simplicity and terseness, Thus shall ye do, and Thus shall ye not do, where would have been the necessity of expounding their meaning?

Perhaps, however, the case is not a happy illustration of the principle; for sometimes writers, being afraid or ashamed to show exactly where they are and what they mean, scatter their ink about and make a cloud, after the manner of a certain fish, seeking darkness rather than light. The best illustration might be found in the mode of learning language by children, were it not that they fly on so swiftly from interjections and exclamations to words, from words to sentences, and from sentences to continuous speech, that we can hardly distinguish the steps of the process. When, however, they are kept back, as the deaf mutes are, and obliged to learn slowly, and still more in a case like Laura's, where every step is apparent and costs a great effort, then we can mark the exact course which nature causes them to take.

Laura's case, indeed, furnishes means by which a person of the plainest sense may see, as through a magnifying-glass, the workings of the mind, which are so rapid and subtile in ordinary cases, as to be understood only by the most keen and observing men. In learning words, she derived not so much advantage as other children do from the stimulus of pleasure, which makes what would be otherwise a task delightful play. Pleased and glad was she, indeed, to be able to learn language; but her pleasure was not exactly of the kind which little children feel. Many never think — happy things! — of

the *use* which language is to be of to them ; they do not perceive that the mind is *at work* in learning to talk, any more than the lambkin perceives that it is working its muscles when gambolling upon the greensward. The love of imitation, the disposition to name things, the pleasure of comparing them and finding resemblances and differences, and, above all, the unconscious desire to communicate with others, — all these motives urge on the child to ceaseless prattle. Now in nature there is a time for every thing, and things learned out of season must be learned less easily and perfectly than if learned in season. Laura had passed the season of life when the vernacular tongue should be learned, before the help came by which she was enabled to learn at all. Five precious years, in which, perhaps, as much, if not more, is learned by children than in any other five years of life, had been to her a dark and silent blank. The natural *disposition* for speech had probably become weakened by long disuse. When she did begin, she was not impelled by sportive playfulness, but by a conscious desire for light, and by a wish to communicate with those who were striving to widen the narrow loopholes of her imprisoned mind. The history of Laura's case, though it teaches us how pleasant may be the pursuit of knowledge at any season, and under the greatest difficulties, teaches us, moreover, that it is most pleasant when conducted according to the indications of nature.

The child of two or three years old keeps continually repeating over the words it hears pronounced, wagging its baby tongue, trying to work its tiny muscles, and to pucker its little lips, without knowing why,



or caring wherefore. It chases after new words with as much glee as it would chase after butterflies, and fills its infant mind with names of things and thoughts of resemblances among things, as gayly as it would gather into its apron smooth pebbles and shining shells. This delightful play lasts so long as we let dame Nature keep school, and content ourselves to act as her assistants. She calls out the higher faculties, one after the other, in their proper order, and furnishes them with the kind of knowledge suited to them; so that the exercise and gratification of each one of them give as much pleasure, though of a different kind, to the child, the boy, and the youth, as word-play gives to the infant.

Work, painful labor, fatigue, — such things are not known in dame Nature's school. Pleasure, and not pain, rewards, and not punishments, are the inducements she holds out for mental exercise. There is something wrong when study is a painful task, and enforced by fear of suffering. It shows that the mind of the scholar has been neglected, or that the wrong subject is presented, or presented in the wrong way or at the wrong time.

The end and aim of instruction are to make us wise and good men, — to bring us to closer union with, and greater love of, God, by knowledge of the manifestations of his presence and the revelations of his goodness, by which we are everywhere surrounded. To suppose that any of the approaches to his presence are over stony soil and through thorny paths, and that we are to be driven by dread of something worse than bleeding feet and torn flesh, is to doubt whether the force by which he draws his children to his bosom is that of love.

The food we eat is not more certainly the means of growth and strength to the body, than is the knowledge we acquire the means of growth and strength to the mind; and the pleasure felt in eating healthy viands is not more natural and certain than that felt in learning, if it only be that the learning is rightly adapted as to time, and quality, and quantity. To give strong meat to babes, — to stuff the stomach with food out of season, to coax it to carry an overload by making the burden sweet and luscious to the taste, — is just like what we do when we give children instruction beyond their years, and induce them to take what they dislike, or more than they want.

Laura, by her experience, has enforced the lesson taught by thousands before her, but so often unheeded, that no theory of instruction can be perfect which overlooks the intimate connection and mutual dependence which God has established between the body and the mind. To keep this connection ever in view seems, to some, low and grovelling; but it is only false pride which makes it seem so. In the eye of God, that notes every falling sparrow, there is nothing created great, and nothing little. He gave us the stomach as well as the brain; the one to digest food for the body, the other, thoughts for the mind; and he coupled pleasures and pains, to mark our obedience or violation of the conditions of his gifts. The ills we suffer from abuse of the stomach are not more manifold and manifest, than those which follow abuse of the brain. The plethora or leanness, the risings and sinkings, the flush or the pallor, the craving or the nausea, the pains, the palpitations, the tremors, or whatever other ailments follow abuse of the first,

have their counterparts in the consequences which follow abuse of the second; in thick-skinned stupidity or thin-skinned sensibility, in passion or apathy, in weak credulity or weaker skepticism, in timidity or in rashness, in oddities, irregularities, and the manifold forms of monomania and insanity.

Laura's case has been watched, not with the purblind eye of affection only, but with the aid of such light as physiology could give, and it has been seen that the condition of her mind and her affections was closely connected with the condition of her physical system. Let it not be supposed that her usual gentleness, her affectionate disposition, and her cheerfulness, come altogether from a happy constitutional temperament, for it is not so. On the contrary, she inherits a constitutional disposition to irritability and violence of temper. The nervous system is the predominant one in her physical constitution. When this is disordered, its tendency is to destroy the equanimity of her temper, and it requires a mental effort to prevent its doing so. Laura relates how impatient she used at times to be, before her instruction was commenced, and when she sat comparatively alone in her dark and silent prison; — how at one time, starting with uncontrollable impatience, she threw the kitten from her lap into the fire.

She might have been ruined by hasty and injudicious treatment, or one which did not keep steadily in view the connection between her mental and physical condition. Miss Wight never lost sight of it; for even since her charge of Laura has commenced, there has been more than one occasion when Laura, unstrung as it were by bodily indisposition, has lost command

of her temper. Allowance was made for the disturbing physical cause, but not so fully by herself as by others. Her awakened conscientiousness comes along close after the sin, and smites her terrible blows, disproportionate, indeed, to the offence. She has long been accustomed to make strong efforts to preserve an equable temper, and generally with entire success. Sometimes, however, there seems to be a sudden paroxysm, and an irrepressible nervous explosion. She immediately becomes conscious of it, and, if she has shown petulance to her teacher or unkindness to any one, she is sad and self-reproachful for a long time. Such scenes are rare, and, to the best of my knowledge and belief, never disconnected with some derangement of her physical health. Under ordinary circumstances she is removed, it is true, from many of the petty cares and ills of life which try the temper of others, and her mental horizon is as clear as a summer sky. When indisposed, however, it has sometimes been suddenly overcast, a flash seen, and then all has become clear and mild again. It is not very long since a painful scene of the kind occurred. She became intensely nervous and excited, without apparent cause ; seemed to become almost beside herself with suppressed temper ; grew white, and then, by a sudden movement, like that of an insane person, she struck her teacher a blow. It was over in an instant, and then she sunk as into a collapse. The agony of her self-reproach grew intense, irrepressible, and she ran away to her closet, shut herself in, and was heard for hours sobbing and weeping as though her heart would break. For a long time nothing could comfort her ; tenderness and kindness seemed only to add to her distress.

The next day she was still suffering, and said most earnestly, to some assurances of continued love for her and trust in her good conduct, "But how can you ever have confidence in me again? How can I learn to control myself? I often feel irritable and impatient, and can control myself, but occasionally my impatient feelings are so strong, I cannot control my body."

But I turn gladly from the blemishes which have appeared momentarily, and at long intervals, and which are mentioned only in the discharge of duty as a chronicler. It is far easier and pleasanter to speak of the habitual mood of her mind, and to dwell upon the gentleness, kindness, cheerfulness, and affection which she manifests, and which make her a truly amiable person in her deportment. The incident I have mentioned above is known only to her teacher and myself, and a knowledge of it will probably excite the surprise of those inmates of the house who see Laura most frequently.

There are perhaps maidens who have inherited a happy physical organization, which works on in healthful play, uninterrupted by an hour of disorder, without any jar, or discord; their harp of thousand strings has ever been in perfect tune, and discoursed sweet harmony of life and character. But such persons are rare. They would be rarer, if three of the great avenues of sense were blocked up; and rarer yet, if they were placed under a microscopic observation, as Laura has been, all their faults "observed, set in a note-book, learned and conned by rote." For the few there are, however, we must thank Heaven! Were there but one such among the count-



less generations that have been born, we should take courage, and hope for humanity. That one may be the perfect type of woman, and more may be formed like her, and yet more and more, till she shall be the prevailing type ; for the highest possible attainment is the most desirable one ; and what is most desirable is surely attainable, else the God we trust in is not the true God.

My hopes of Laura have been, in some respects, disappointed ; but that is clearly because they were unreasonable. Some important considerations were overlooked ; such as the hereditary disposition, the deranged constitution, the undue development of the nervous system. The result, however, has been to give an increase of faith, amounting to conviction, in the efficacy of wise measures for moulding and shaping character. Native dispositions, and tendencies, and peculiarities, may never be eradicated or entirely changed ; but by repressing some and encouraging others, by removing this temptation and bringing in that inducement, the young and tender mind may be trained up to strength and beauty.

The disturbing forces are various and strong, but the native tendency towards good is uniform and everlasting. The corrupting influence of vicious associations is great, but the purifying influence of virtuous associations is greater. I now see, with pain and sorrow, how some unfavorable influences might have been kept from acting upon Laura's character ; but I see also, how, under ordinary circumstances, a person inheriting the mental peculiarities that she does — with imperfect health, wearing her nerves upon the outside, as it were, and so sorely

bereaved of the senses through which come most of the material pleasures of life — would almost certainly be selfish, querulous, and sad, whereas she is generous, uncomplaining, and even happy.

In the language of Miss Wight, “Much might be said of her sympathy with those about her who are sick or in trouble, and those who are suffering everywhere; of the innocent simplicity of character which she has preserved, notwithstanding the attention she is continually receiving; of her sorrow for the faults of others, speaking of them in sorrow and not in a detracting spirit.” “I am confident,” says Miss W., “that with me, or any one who loved her, she would work all day long patiently for her daily bread. Now and then, indeed, she speaks sadly of the time when she must leave the school and do so.”

This leads me to speak of a subject about which there should be forethought and preparation, to wit, the means of her support in the future. She understands the worth and the importance of money, and begins to be desirous of possessing it, not as an end, but as a means. It would have been easy to conceal this knowledge from her, and some regret that it has not been done, lest it shall destroy to her some of the beauty and poetry of life. But it is a truth and reality, and there is no true poetry and beauty inconsistent with a knowledge of these. It never occurs to her that her friends may die, and she be left to the charities of the world, or that its charities are ever cold, for she has known only its loving-kindness; but she simply feels a desire for independence. She knows very well what this is; she perceives what a difference it makes among her friends and acquaint-

ance. Some of them are wealthy, some are poor; and though she cares not for wealth, she would shun poverty.

She knows the cost of rich shawls and fine lace, of precious stones, and jewelry, and furniture; but no display of them ever seems to affect her appreciation of the owner's worth. As yet, she has escaped the disturbing influence which wealth, and other hollow and factitious distinctions among persons, have upon the opinion and esteem in which they are held. She is no respecter of things artificial or superficial. The absence or presence of "the guinea's stamp" alters not, in her mind, the value of the metal that is in the man. No display of wealth or luxury can dazzle her, though it may be perceived by her. Even beauty of person or sweetness of voice fails to affect her. The seductions of the smile and of the eye charm not her judgment into sleep. The speaker must drop, before her, the masquerade of soft smiles and sweet tones, which impose upon others, and his words have weight only according to their real worth. They must be signs of feelings and deeds, and if they tally not in every particular with the things they represent, they are thrown aside as counterfeit and worthless coin.

She meets the Governor of the State as quietly as she does the most ordinary person; and she would meet the Queen of England just as quietly, though she might perhaps raise a curious hand to feel if she wore her crown. True, she is fond of being neatly dressed herself, as has been said, and she is curious to know all about the newest fashions. She would, if permitted, examine with eager fingers the new arti-

cles of dress upon a fashionable lady, fresh from Paris ; but her admiration of their qualities would not be transferred to the wearer, any more than it would to the padded figure that turns round and round in a shop-window. Nevertheless, she has an appreciation of the value of the comforts and refinements of life, and of the importance of having the means to secure the enjoyment of them. Her father is a respectable farmer, and a man of some worldly inheritance, and he would gladly give her the shelter of his home for life. She loves her parents and her brothers, but she could not find in their remote village the means of continual culture and improvement, which are to her the bread of life, and the appetite for which grows by what it feeds upon. She desires to possess what she knows to be the key to many of the pleasures and advantages of life, — to wit, money, — and is beginning to gather it together in her small way. She works constantly, making bags, purses, &c., which are sold, and the profits paid to her. It is evident, however, that she cannot earn enough, by ever so diligent use of her fingers, to give her a competence. Other means she has none, though she sometimes, with pleasing simplicity, says she has. In a late conversation with Miss Bremer, Laura asked her, with perfect simplicity, whether she found that writing books “paid well.” “Pretty well,” was the reply. Upon which Laura eagerly rejoined, “Do you think, if I should write a book, it would pay well?”

Perhaps, by a little effort on the part of her friends, money enough might be raised to buy for her a life-annuity, which would place her beyond the reach of pecuniary want, and secure to her the attendance and

companionship of some young lady, who could be to her what Miss Wight has so long been. Laura will do what she can, diligently and cheerfully, to perform those duties and labors of life, of which every conscientious person should discharge his proper share. She asks no one to do for her what she can do for herself. She wishes no one to be her menial or servant. She has already done some service in her day and generation, by setting forth in her deportment, under her sore afflictions, the native dignity of the human character. She has shown in what degree the spirit is dependent upon the senses for its manifestation and enjoyment. She has shown how little the factitious and arbitrary distinctions of life are necessary to happiness. She is, however, utterly dependent upon human sympathy and aid for the continuance of her happiness, and even of her life. She can appeal only as she has done, by the mute exhibition of her helplessness, for that sympathy and aid. Hitherto it has been proffered with eagerness and in abundance. May it never be withheld; may an hour of need never come to her; but may new friends be raised up to her, when those who now watch over her with the tender solicitude of parents can watch over and comfort her no longer upon earth!

Respectfully submitted,

S. G. HOWE.



# APPENDIX

## GENERAL ABSTRACT OF THE

Dr. *Perkins Institution and Massachusetts Asylum for the*

For amount paid on orders of Auditors of Accounts, viz. : —

|                                                                                                                                                                                  |             |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------|
| Steward's Account, for Provisions, Fuel, Wages of Domestic, Stable, &c., . . . . .                                                                                               | \$ 8,816.41 |
| Salaries of Officers and Teachers, . . . . .                                                                                                                                     | 6,399.50    |
| Repairs, Alterations, and Improvements, Carpenters, Masons, Iron Work, Stone, Lumber, Painting, Papering, Introducing Cochituate Water, Pipes, Plumbing, Grading, &c., . . . . . | 3,194.23    |
| Printing Department, . . . . .                                                                                                                                                   | 311.78      |
| Music, Instruments, and repairing same, . . . . .                                                                                                                                | 150.88      |
| Fire Insurance, . . . . .                                                                                                                                                        | 160.00      |
| Clothing for Pupils, . . . . .                                                                                                                                                   | 49.10       |
| Rent of Office, Repairs, and Expenses, . . . . .                                                                                                                                 | 144.90      |
| Books, Stationery, and Apparatus, . . . . .                                                                                                                                      | 303.96      |
| Postages and Advertising, . . . . .                                                                                                                                              | 59.01       |
| Printing Annual Report, . . . . .                                                                                                                                                | 166.98      |
| Expeditions of Pupils, . . . . .                                                                                                                                                 | 57.68       |
| For Bust of late William Oliver, Esq., . . . . .                                                                                                                                 | 550.00      |
| New Workshop paid on Account, . . . . .                                                                                                                                          | 2,645.75    |
| Expenses of Idiot School, . . . . .                                                                                                                                              | 3,414.45    |
| Miscellaneous Items, Leaders, Garden Expenses, Trees, &c. . . . .                                                                                                                | 200.00      |

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\$ 26,624.63

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## C.

## TREASURER'S REPORT FOR 1849,

*Blind in Account with* T. B. WALES, JR., *Treasurer.* Cr.

|                                                 |             |  |  |  |              |
|-------------------------------------------------|-------------|--|--|--|--------------|
| By Balance on hand, Jan. 1, 1849,               |             |  |  |  | \$ 85.97     |
| " Amount received from State of Massachusetts,  | \$ 9,000.00 |  |  |  |              |
| " " " " " N. Hampshire,                         | 750.00      |  |  |  |              |
| " " " " " Vermont,                              | 489.82      |  |  |  |              |
| " " " " " Maine,                                | 6,375.00    |  |  |  |              |
| " " " " " S. Carolina,                          | 120.00      |  |  |  |              |
| " " " " " Indiana Inst. for the Blind,          | 361.15      |  |  |  |              |
| " " " " " Town of Portsmouth,                   | 16.30       |  |  |  |              |
| " " " " for two Certif. City Water Loan,        | 1,910.69    |  |  |  |              |
| " " " " " Interest on Stocks,                   | 1,957.35    |  |  |  |              |
| " " " " " Books sold,                           | 28.50       |  |  |  |              |
| " " " " from Paying Pupils,                     | 186.75      |  |  |  |              |
|                                                 |             |  |  |  | <hr/>        |
|                                                 |             |  |  |  | 21,195.56    |
| " " " " for Old Materials sold,                 |             |  |  |  | 23.75        |
| " " " " for second and third Payments on Legacy |             |  |  |  |              |
| from Miss Tufts,                                |             |  |  |  | 100.00       |
| " " " " for Loan at Union Bank,                 |             |  |  |  | 1,491.25     |
| " " " " from State on account of Idiot School,  |             |  |  |  | 2,500.00     |
| " " " " of S. G. Howe, being amount received by |             |  |  |  |              |
| him from the State of Massachusetts             |             |  |  |  |              |
| over and above his actual expenses on           |             |  |  |  |              |
| the Commission for examining into the           |             |  |  |  |              |
| Condition of Idiots, &c.,                       |             |  |  |  | 112.50       |
| " " " " from Paying Pupils in Idiot School,     |             |  |  |  | 775.00       |
| " Balance due from Institution,                 |             |  |  |  | 340.60       |
|                                                 |             |  |  |  | <hr/>        |
|                                                 |             |  |  |  | \$ 26,624.63 |

*Errors excepted.*(Signed,) T. B. WALES, JR., *Treasurer.**Boston, Dec. 31, 1849.*



## TERMS OF ADMISSION.

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YOUNG blind persons, of good moral character, can be admitted to the School by paying \$ 160 *per annum*. This sum covers all expenses, except for clothing; namely, board, washing, medicines, the use of books, musical instruments, &c. The pupils must furnish their own clothing, and pay their own fares to and from the Institution.

There is a vacation in the Spring, and another in the Autumn. The friends of the pupils can visit them whenever they choose.

Indigent blind persons, of suitable age and character, belonging to Massachusetts, can be admitted gratuitously, by application to the Governor for a warrant.

The following is a good form, though any other will do : —

“TO HIS EXCELLENCY THE GOVERNOR : —

“SIR, — My son, (or daughter, or nephew, or niece, as the case may be,) named A. B., and aged \_\_\_\_\_, cannot be introduced into the common schools for want of sight. I am unable to pay for the tuition at the Perkins Institution and Massachusetts Asylum for the Blind, and I request that your Excellency will grant a warrant for free admission.

“ Very respectfully,      \_\_\_\_\_ .”

The application may be made by any relation or friend, if the parents are dead or absent.

It should be accompanied by a certificate from one or more of the Selectmen of the town, or Aldermen of the city, in this form : —

“I hereby certify, that, in my opinion, Mr. \_\_\_\_\_ is not a wealthy person, and that he cannot afford to pay \$ 160 *per annum* for his child's instruction.

(Signed,)      “ \_\_\_\_\_ .”

There should also be a certificate, signed by some regular physician, in this form : —

"I certify, that, in my opinion, ——— has not sufficient vision to be taught in common schools; and that he is free from epilepsy, and from any contagious disease.

(Signed,) "—————."

These papers should be done up together, and directed to "The Secretary of State, State-House, Boston, Mass."

An obligation will be required from some responsible person, that the pupil shall be removed without expense to the Institution, whenever it may be desirable to discharge him.

The usual period of tuition is from five to seven years.

Indigent blind persons residing in Maine, New Hampshire, Vermont, Connecticut, Rhode Island, and South Carolina, by applying as above to the "Commissioners for the Blind," care of the Secretary of State in the respective States, can obtain warrants of free admission.

For further particulars, address Dr. S. G. Howe, Director of the Institution for the Blind, Boston, Mass.

The relations or friends of the blind who may be sent to the Institution are requested to furnish information in answer to the following questions:—

1. What is the age of the applicant?
2. Where was he born?
3. Was he born blind?
4. If not born blind, at what age did he become so?
5. What is the supposed cause of the blindness?
6. Have there been any cases of blindness, or deafness, or insanity, in the family of the applicant, among his brothers and sisters, parents, grandparents, uncles, aunts, or cousins?
7. Were his parents or grandparents affected with scrofula, in any form; with consumption; humors, such as salt rheum; eruptions of any kind; or had they any peculiarity of bodily constitution whatever?
8. Were the parents or the grandparents of the applicant related to each other by blood? If so, in what degree?



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THE TRUSTEES

OF THE

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ASYLUM FOR THE BLIND,

TO THE

CORPORATION.

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CAMBRIDGE:  
METCALF AND COMPANY,

PRINTERS TO THE UNIVERSITY.

1851.





NINETEENTH

ANNUAL REPORT

OF

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1851.



# REPORT.

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Perkins Institution and Massachusetts Asylum for the Blind.

*Boston, January 13, 1851.*

TO THE MEMBERS OF THE CORPORATION.

GENTLEMEN,—In obedience to law and custom, we lay before you a Report of the history and condition of the Institution under our charge for the last year.

The number of inmates reported on the 1st of January, 1850, was one hundred and two. Of these fourteen have left, while twenty-one new ones have entered, so that the present number is one hundred and nine. This is the largest number ever connected with the Institution at one time.

Eighty-three are connected with the school, and are for the most part of tender age. Twenty-six are adults belonging to the Work Department, most of whom were formerly pupils in the school. This number does not include several blind persons who are employed at their homes in the country upon work furnished them from the shop.

The health of the inmates has been good. Indeed, when it is considered that a large proportion of them are born of poor stock, and have inherited

feeble constitutions, with a strong tendency to scrofulous and other diseases, the health that has prevailed among them is remarkable. There has been very little sickness, and no case of death.

The past year has been one of general prosperity with the Institution.

The Report of the Director will show that the school is in a flourishing condition, and that the officers and teachers have performed their duties with fidelity and ability.

The Director was obliged to leave during the summer term, for the benefit of his health, and the duties of his office were undertaken by Dr. Edward Jarvis. We would take this opportunity of expressing our great satisfaction with the manner in which that gentleman conducted the affairs of the Institution, and our thanks for the lively interest in its welfare which he has manifested in various ways.

The new building for a workshop was finished and occupied in May last. It is spacious and well ventilated, and proves upon trial to be very convenient and well adapted to its purpose. It will furnish room and accommodations for a hundred blind persons to work in with comfort and advantage.

The Work Department generally has been in a prosperous condition. It continues steadily to gain public favor, and to receive increasing patronage. The amount of sales the past year was \$19,318.65, being an increase of \$3,437.17 over those of any former year. It is most desirable that the business should be still further increased; and the friends of the Institution are earnestly invited to try whether they cannot purchase such simple articles



as are manufactured by the blind, upon quite as advantageous terms as elsewhere.

The more the goods are called for, the greater the number of blind persons who can be employed. There are still, we are sorry to say, a great many of them in the country towns, whose grievous calamity is made more heavy by their being obliged to sit with folded arms, and to pass their days in idleness and dependence. By giving business to our shop, people will give employment to more of such unfortunate persons. It should always be borne in mind, however, that the goods are put into the market for fair competition, and sold as cheap as others of equal quality can be bought anywhere. It has been found to be sound policy not to count upon charity in the way of business; and this policy is acted upon in our establishment.

It is often said by interested or misinformed persons, that the patrons of the blind expect to pay, and do pay, higher prices in the way of charity. This is both a mistake and a wrong. No establishment has so great facilities as ours for doing work cheaply; for here no profits are looked for upon capital, and none are given to any persons except the actual workers. Of course, no one can afford to sell goods of equal quality any cheaper.

For an account of the state of the finances, we refer you to the Report of the Treasurer.

It is proper to take this opportunity of expressing our obligations to that gentleman for the courteous and satisfactory manner in which he has discharged the duties of the office.

We have striven to use the funds with strict

economy, but have felt confident that any wise expenditure of money for extending the usefulness of the Institution, however much it may diminish the small capital, would be approved by the Legislature and by your body. We have not suffered ourselves to fear that a liberal policy in providing things really desirable and useful will cause any embarrassment in future. So long as the Institution continues to promote the interest and welfare of the blind, and to merit confidence, it will be sure to find friends and supporters in this generous community.

In the management of pecuniary matters, the strictest accountability is required. All the income is received by the Treasurer, and paid out by him upon orders of the Auditors. His accounts are examined by a committee at the end of each year. All bills for current expenses are examined monthly, and regularly credited, and not a dollar is paid except upon exhibition of a proper voucher.

The various inventories of real and personal estate which are required by the rules of your Board are herewith submitted.

In closing this Report, we would earnestly commend the Institution to the continued favor of the Board and of the public.

Respectfully submitted.

THOMAS G. CARY,  
THEOPHILUS P. CHANDLER,  
J. J. DIXWELL,  
GEORGE B. EMERSON,  
STEPHEN FAIRBANKS,  
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SAMUEL MAY,  
ROBERT RANTOUL, SEN.  
GEORGE R. RUSSELL,  
CHARLES SUMNER.

## APPENDIX A.

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### REPORT OF THE DIRECTOR TO THE TRUSTEES.

GENTLEMEN,—The monthly reports which I have had the honor to lay before you narrated passing events, and set forth in detail the condition of the Institution. They may now be passed in review, and the whole summed up in one.

Should I confine myself strictly, however, to a notice of the studies and occupations of the pupils, my Report would be only a repetition of former Annual Reports. I shall take the liberty, therefore, to make it the occasion of expressing such thoughts upon the general subject of the education of the blind as the various topics it touches upon may suggest.

It seems to be desirable that the published reports of all institutions for the blind should contain something more than the proceedings at the annual meeting, the statements and the speculations of visiting committees, the names of governors and officers, the amount of donations with the donors' names, and the number of dollars spent for brick and mortar, food, clothing, and other expenses. One is sometimes sorely disappointed on examining the

reports of foreign institutions, the goodly size of which gave promise of valuable contents, to find how utterly valueless they are. The first four or five pages are occupied with an account of the annual meeting and dinner, of the gratulatory speeches, the self-laudatory resolutions, and, finally, the vote of thanks to the titled individuals who condescended to attend the meeting and eat the dinner; while the remaining forty or fifty solid pages are taken up with the names of the patrons of the charity, and the amount, to a farthing, of their several gifts.

The reports of most charitable establishments in this country are better in many respects; but those of institutions for the blind never contain too much, and seldom enough, of the observations, thoughts, and opinions of the persons actually engaged in managing the establishment, and in daily intercourse with the pupils. Their opinions are worth at least as much, and their experience is surely worth more, than those of committees who visit only occasionally, and should be preserved with equal care. However crude and unimportant their observations, and even their thoughts and theories, seem now, they may prove valuable by and by, at least as *mémoires pour servir* to those who are seeking for every scrap of information touching the causes and consequences of blindness. Economy is always a cardinal virtue in such establishments, but surely it should be practised in things spiritual as well as in things material. No crumbs of bread should be lost, for they nourish the body; no crumbs of knowledge either, for they nourish the spirit.

The closing up of one avenue of sense, — an avenue so large and important that at least one third of

all the nervous impressions which are necessary for sensation and consciousness pass through it to the sensorium, — must have important moral, as well as physical effects. These effects, as seen in a large number of individuals, constitute a novel phasis of human development, which is surely worth the careful study of scientific men. They can be well observed in establishments where the blind are congregated in large numbers, and best observed by those who frequent them intimately for a long time. These considerations will show what might not be otherwise apparent, the appropriateness of some of the remarks that follow.

The total number of inmates of the Institution during the past year has been upon an average about one hundred, sometimes a few more, sometimes a few less. Of these eighty-three were pupils in the school, and the others employed in the Work Department.

The year has not been saddened by any visit of death, nor clouded by any calamity. It has rolled on peacefully and pleasantly, and been added with its blessings to those former ones which make the debt of our gratitude to God so great.

The teachers in the school, and the persons employed in various capacities, have performed their respective duties, not only to my satisfaction, but in a way to merit and secure my gratitude. It is but simple truth to say, that the prosperity of the establishment is in a great measure owing to their zealous coöperation and faithful labors.

The pupils in the junior department have been diligent in study, and generally correct and praiseworthy in their behavior. The kindly relations which



exist between them and their teachers are mutually creditable.

The men and women who come daily to the workshop have been punctual in attendance, and diligent at work. Farther than this, we require nothing of them save the maintenance of a good moral character. They are left to that wholesome liberty of action which we all claim for ourselves.

The various departments of the Institution will each be noticed in detail. I have endeavored to conduct the whole establishment in a quiet and unostentatious manner; inviting the examination of those who are really interested in it, but shunning rather than courting for it public attention. There is perhaps, in this respect, some room for improvement upon the course followed in former years, which course was, however, as much a matter of necessity as of choice. Experience shows that it is desirable to give to the pupils in public institutions more of the advantages of private education than has usually been done. It shows, too, that there are a few disadvantages attendant upon these establishments. It is, therefore, our duty to see whether they cannot be counteracted by special care and attention in the mode of administration.

Among the disadvantages alluded to is the tendency which such establishments have to increase, if not to beget, in the mind of the public, and even of the pupils themselves, the notion that the blind form a class apart, and differ essentially from other persons. This notion is unquestionably productive of evil, as indeed all false notions whatever are. Nature knows no such class as that of the blind. Blindness, when not

occasioned by some mechanical injury, is only incidental to an imperfect state of civilization and of physical development. The blind child has a bodily infirmity, the moral and physical disadvantages of which are to be lessened, as far as possible, by training and instruction. The task may be undertaken in his own family, or in a public institution. A full consideration of the comparative merits of a public and a private course of instruction would occasion too long a digression, and it must be dismissed for the present with a passing remark.

The plan of assembling together in one school and boarding-house a great number of blind youth, for the purpose of education, has some advantages for the development of character over any other. It is true that the principal benefits of the system, so far as it regards the pupils, may be obtained in other ways; yet the cost would be so great as to put them beyond the reach of ordinary persons. Such institutions, then, are absolutely necessary in the present condition of society. They are, moreover, in various ways, sources of usefulness and happiness to the blind, such as few could obtain elsewhere; but they have their disadvantages also, and are productive of more or less good, according as their fundamental principles are more or less sound and their administration is more or less wise.

Our American institutions are as yet in the gristle of youth, and now is the time to set forth and correct their imperfections, before they harden into the bone of manhood, and become permanent in the system. There is, however, a great sensitiveness on the part of some connected with them, and still more

upon the part of the blind themselves, which is almost sure to bring censure upon any one who questions the perfections of either ; and not all the interest I have manifested in both shields me from it, since I have ventured to do so. But words of truth, spoken in the spirit of kindness, though very unsavory after long familiarity with language seasoned by praise, are sure to be useful in the end.

I have stated that the infirmity of blindness tends not only to hinder the full development of the mental faculties, but to obstruct the harmonious development of the moral nature ; and that, while our public institutions, as usually conducted, recognize the former evil, and provide suitable remedies for it, they overlook, and even in some degree increase, the latter. This is an important matter, and it is worth while to consider it carefully.

It may safely be taken for granted, that the lack of one of the five great avenues of sense must be unfavorable to the harmonious development of man's nature, otherwise our gratitude to the Giver of this glorious gift of sight is all uncalled for. This infirmity must act as a disturbing force in the order of development of the various mental and moral faculties which form character. Its effect must be somewhat like that of light coming upon a plant from one side only, and causing it to grow crooked. It must occasion certain peculiarities of character, which, though modified by the idiosyncrasy of each individual, will have a common resemblance.

I shall not now attempt to describe these peculiarities, but content myself with saying, that, since they are occasioned by an abnormal condition of body, —

by an infirmity, — by the occultation of an important sense, — they are not natural, they are not favorable to mental and moral growth, and of course they are not desirable. In ordinary cases, they may be hardly perceptible to the common observer, and are only seen in their true nature when, by unpropitious circumstances, they are brought out very strongly, and then they become deformities.

Now it is desirable, of course, to correct these peculiarities, or at least to diminish them as much as we can ; and the best way of doing so is by associating, as much as is possible, the persons who have them with persons who have them not ; that is, blind persons with seeing persons ; for, however it may be with bodily disorders, it is not true of mental and moral ones, that *similes similibus curantur*.

Let us see how these considerations apply in the instruction and training of the class of persons in whose welfare we all have so much interest, keeping steadily in view this cardinal principle, which should be as the pole-star to the teacher of the blind, — that his pupils are to be trained up for living among people who see.

A hundred blind children were growing up with other children in families scattered over the State. Each one of them was forming, with the children and grown people about him, as well as he could, those relations of the mind and the heart which have an abiding influence through life. Not one of them, perhaps, had ever known another child blind like himself. It probably had not occurred to him that he differed much from those about him. Having common feelings, sympathies, and affections with other

children, and a common language to express them, he would only perceive that he lacked one sense which they possessed. This did not lessen his happiness or his enjoyment of life, because, as well as he could comprehend this extra sense, it was not a source of immediate pleasure or enjoyment to its possessors, but only a great help to locomotion, and a great advantage in many ways. The darkness about him was not gloomy until he learned that others considered it so.

Now it is easy to perceive, that, if this child were to grow up where he was born, all his tendencies and his efforts would be to make himself as nearly like those about him as possible ; that he would contrive ways of doing as nearly as may be what they do, and that he would form, more or less intimately, all the usual intellectual and social relations with them. Having speech, he would not be cut off, as the deaf mute is, from the closest of these relations of sympathy of heart and of mind ; and if he could only be taught in common schools, with other children, he might form these relations more or less extensively as he advanced from childhood to youth. Growing up with these *surroundings*, and under these influences, it is clear that he would be in the best possible condition for counteracting the moral effects which grow out of his infirmity, and for preventing the growth of those peculiarities of character which are the result of blindness.

Now when a hundred of these children are brought together in an institution formed for training and instructing them in common, it is manifest that different moral influences begin to bear upon them, and to mould them into new shapes, or rather



to stamp deeper certain original peculiarities which the teacher would fain efface. With all the advantages for intellectual culture, there mingle certain influences which we find to be unfavorable. The very peculiarities of character above alluded to must be drawn out and made stronger by the intimate and long-continued association of persons in each of whom they prevail. Each blind child now finds himself surrounded by companions and exemplars who have the very traits of character which we wish to correct in him. The love of imitation, so strong in the young, no longer leads him to conform himself to seeing people, and to think, to speak, and to act as they do, but to conform himself to the blind, and to think, speak, and act as the blind do. A clannish spirit begins to appear, and to increase, the longer the association continues. We see the seeds of the evil in our institutions; and we see the full fruit, in all its deformity, in the great asylums of Europe which the blind inhabit for life.

This is natural; indeed, it is true not only of the blind, but it may be said that all establishments which draw together a large number of persons, marked by any common infirmity, from different parts of the country, and from the various social relations and occupations in which they are naturally placed, and keep them together for life, are of doubtful value. The question of their worth must be decided according as another question is answered; that is, whether the evils which such establishments prevent are greater than those which they produce. The latter question will be decided differently in different stages of society. An institu-

tion may be good here, and now, which would be bad elsewhere, or even here a hundred years hence. Our children may justly consider establishments as unnecessary and bad, which we now as justly consider necessary and good. An asylum for infirm infants, if established in Sparta, might have been an improvement upon Taygetus, but here in Massachusetts such an establishment would probably rather increase than lessen the exposure and abandonment of infants.

With regard to the blind, it may be said that, morally speaking, they grow blinder by living too long and too exclusively with each other. Whatever may be the peculiarities of character which result from blindness, and which tend to unfit the person for a member of society, we are to strive to correct them by education. But, in administering our institutions with a view to this end, we are met at the outset by a difficulty which makes me fear there is a fundamental error in their organization. During the six or seven years in which the character is most easily moulded, the blind must associate almost exclusively with each other, whereas we have seen that it is most desirable they should associate with the seeing.

Now, admitting this to be true, what is the conclusion? Not that our institutions are not good, but that they are not so good as they might be. They must exist, and more must be formed in other parts of the country where they do not now exist. For the purposes of intellectual training we must as yet have schools where the blind may be taught in common; but it is a question worthy the attention of those whose good fortune it may be to lay the foundations of new institutions with the advantage of the

experience of others, whether any thing more than a school-house adapted to the wants of the blind is desirable, and whether in all other respects the pupils should not be submitted to the ordinary influences of society. Our own establishment having been the first organized in this country, we, at least, had no profit of the experience of any but European institutions, and upon those we certainly have made some improvements, of which they have since availed themselves. There is room for still more improvement, and we have the great advantage of latitude in the mode of administration, and willingness to adopt any manifest improvement. Once we had more zeal than knowledge; it will be well if, with the increase of knowledge, the zeal does not diminish.

By means of sound general principles kept constantly in view, we are enabled so to administer our charge as greatly to lessen the disadvantages and evils attendant upon every human institution. Moreover, teachers of the blind, by constant mindfulness of these principles, can make the most of certain advantages which the great docility of the blind, and their fondness for study, give to them. For instance, they can well do without some of the spurs to diligence and good conduct which are plunged rowel-deep in common schools, such as competition and rivalry, rewards and punishments, medals, prizes, "parts," and the like. Teachers of the blind can safely appeal to higher motives, and rely upon the pure pleasures which attend the healthy exercise of the mental and moral faculties, and follow the attainment of knowledge and the doing of good.

Public examinations and public exhibitions are

still less necessary for leading the blind to diligence in study and correctness in behavior. I am quite convinced that their influence upon the pupils is not a good one. Public examinations in general are to teachers troublesome ceremonies, that show any thing but the real state of the school; while to the scholars they are mere bugbears, which serve but to frighten the timid, and that only for once. They can rarely be made a test of acquirement, and more rarely of merit. There is an unhealthy excitement during the preparation for them, which sometimes becomes painful, if not injurious, during the performance.

As for public exhibitions, the sensitive minds of youth at first recoil from the very thought of them. This is especially true of girls. It is easily overcome, to be sure. A few exhibitions will remove all scruples; but it is a question whether they do not remove something else which had better have remained. Scholars studying for exhibition surely are not studying from the right motives. And what is it that is sought to be exhibited? Any excellence, any merit, any virtue? But the very spirit and essence of these excellences evaporate in the effort to display them before the world. Knowledge should be the scholar's beloved mistress, whose charms he cherishes in his secret heart, and which he never cares to show for the admiration of others. Parade, and tinsel, and glitter, and noise, are the lower incentives and rewards in the soldier's lower course; the scholar, as he ascends into higher and purer regions, should willingly leave them to him, as instruments wherewith to dazzle the eyes and split the ears of "groundlings."

There is too much in the preparation for and performances of exhibitions in seminaries of learning that appeals to an order of motives, which, if not low, are strong enough without artificial encouragement,—such as self-interest or self-esteem on the part of managers, and love of display and love of approbation on the part of pupils. Such machinery may be necessary in other institutions of education; they may be necessary even in schools for the blind during their infancy, as modes of advertisement, and as means of convincing the incredulous. They were formerly deemed necessary in our own; but sufficient to the day was the evil thereof, and I have for several years discontinued them. There seems to be no disadvantage to the pupils, but, on the other hand, many advantages, from this discontinuance. It is certainly most agreeable to our feelings and tastes to abstain as much as possible from what, after all, is but the parade of an infirmity.

In order to satisfy the reasonable curiosity of strangers, two hours are set apart every Saturday in the forenoon for the admittance of those persons who have made previous application; and, in order to gratify the not unreasonable inquisitiveness of the local public, the doors are opened on the afternoon of the first Saturday of each month to all who have supplied themselves with tickets. This is not done for the purpose of giving exhibitions, but it is the least inconvenient way of meeting the earnest request of people to visit the establishment, and see the pupils at their studies and occupations. It is not desirable that there should be any parade on these occasions, or that any special effort should be made



to show off the pupils, in order to keep up public interest. And there is not; they are considered simply as opportunities for seeing the school in its ordinary condition, which are conceded to public curiosity. This will soon be gratified, and then these public days may be discontinued altogether, a consummation most devoutly to be wished. At any rate, I hope never to have any more formal and public exhibitions or shows of the blind here. They smack too much of the spirit which requires a uniform of "blue coats" and mob-caps in the charity schools of the fatherland.

But besides their effect upon the blind, which certainly is not good, these exhibitions tend to strengthen two notions in the public mind which are already too strong. The first is, that the blind naturally form a class apart, and different from other people; the second is, that schools for their instruction are peculiarly "charity schools," while common schools are not charity schools. The first is entirely untrue anywhere; the second is untrue in those parts of this country where the common-school system prevails.

I have already spoken of the unfavorable effects upon the blind of the first of these false notions; the effects of the second are worth a passing word.

That institutions for the blind are regarded as peculiarly charity schools is in some measure the fault of those who have charge of them, and who fail to assert the just claim of their pupils upon the public and the State. It is an admitted principle with us, that all children have a right to an education at the hand of the public, and I cannot see why there is any more charity in giving it to a blind

child than to one who sees. To the ready argument that their instruction costs much more than the instruction given in common schools, it may be replied that so does the instruction given to boys in the Latin and High Schools. Their instruction costs many times more than that given in grammar and district schools; sometimes a hundredfold more than the amount of their parents' school-tax, and yet the superior advantages they enjoy are not called charity.

Our institution should be considered as one of the common schools of Massachusetts, (and so in the other States,) differing from them in this only, that whereas the public cannot afford to place the means of special instruction near to the door of every parent of a blind child who needs instruction, it compounds the matter by taking the child to a central school, and instructing him there. It ought not to cost his father any more to give him common instruction, than it costs the father of a seeing child; the poor man has burden enough already in the infirmity of his child, and if he pays his school-tax he ought not to be considered as a recipient of charity, any more than his neighbor who sends his son to a common school; certainly not more than the neighbor whose son attends a Latin or High School. It may be urged, that he gets his blind son boarded, as well as taught, whereas the others are only taught. But what of that? He would in most cases prefer to board his son at home, if the State would bring the means of instruction as near his door as the next district school is, — that is, as near as it does to the door of his neighbor.

When we place the claims of the blind upon the

common ground of right, we relieve them from the humiliating feeling that they are in any way receiving alms; and we disabuse the public of the false idea, that it is doing a peculiarly meritorious work of charity.

The general course of instruction and training in the school department has been the same during the past as during preceding years. All the pupils receive instruction daily in the branches of study which are taught in our best common schools; and the greater part of them make at least as much proficiency as ordinary youth, in arithmetic, algebra, geography, history, physiology, natural philosophy, and such other subjects as can be taught orally. That they do as much as this implies upon their part uncommon fondness for intellectual light, and uncommon effort to obtain it; and upon the part of their teachers it implies uncommon ability and industry. Without these deserving efforts of both parties, there could not be much success; and the merit of both will be more apparent if we rid ourselves of the prevalent, but erroneous notion, that the blind, *as a class*, are naturally equal, if not superior, in mental ability to the seeing. The broad principle that soundness and vigor of mind come from soundness and vigor of body shows that this cannot be so. Even the most conceited blind person would admit that, if he had eyesight, his mental power and resources, and consequently his intellectual attainments, would be greatly increased.

It is time that the blind, and those interested in their education and welfare, should recognize and act upon the great law of nature, that the more numer-

ous and the more perfect are the sensorial agencies of the mind, the higher and more perfect, other things being equal, will be its development. It may be disagreeable to give up a cherished notion, especially if it lowers a pretension ; but the sooner we get our feet down through the loose support of fancy upon the rock of truth, the firmer we shall stand, and the more effectually shall we work. The blind are not going to bury their four talents, because they find others have five. On the contrary, those who are disposed to work at all will work the harder. We have proof enough of this in the history of those who, without sight, have written their names high up on the roll of fame ; and we have abundant living proof in all our institutions, where scores of blind youth, by superior industry and perseverance, make as much progress in the higher branches of study as do their more favored rivals in high schools and academies.

There is about one half of our pupils whose native mental power is equal to the average mental power of seeing persons ; and according to my observation the proportion is not greater in other institutions. These, by reason of great fondness for study, and by diligence and perseverance, do make mental attainments, which are, at the least, equal with those of other youth in the same walks of life. It will be found that this class is made up, for the most part, of those totally blind. The other half, which falls below the average of common youth in point of ability, is made up, for the most part, of the seeing blind, as they are called ; that is, of those who have partial vision, — the purblind. The same thing will probably be found in other schools for the blind.

This is but the rough draft of a classification, to which, of course, there will be exceptions, and which does not include those who become blind by accident.

It may be said, that this supposed inferiority of the purblind contradicts what was said just now, that the more numerous and the more perfect the sensorial agencies of the mind, the higher and more perfect will be its development ; and that, moreover, the supposition may be disposed of by the *reductio ad absurdum* ; for if a little vision makes one inferior to the stone-blind, then having a great deal, that is, perfect sight, should reduce one still lower ! But it is not so. The assertion is not that the possession of a little vision by the seeing blind is the *cause* of the mental inferiority, but merely that it is its usual accompaniment. The cause must be sought elsewhere, and, if this were the place to enter upon a long physiological discussion, it would be easy to set it forth. I purpose to follow up the subject upon some other occasion, and will simply remark here, that purblindness, especially that accompanied with involuntary oscillation of the eyeballs, is usually the effect of a cause which pervades the whole bodily organization. The general texture seems *loose* ; the fibre is *minus*, while the lymph is *plus* ; there is but little vital force, and consequently little energy in the performance of the functions generally, those of the brain of course included. On the other hand, there are many cases of blindness where there is no apparent affection of any part except the organ of vision itself, or the nerves and fibres of the brain in immediate connection with it. Take, for instance, some



of the cases of amaurosis, *gutta serena*, — the “pure drop” which intercepted Milton’s “visual ray,” — and it will be found that the general vigor of the body is not sensibly impaired, and that the difficulties in the way of intellectual attainment are more than compensated by increased taste and opportunity for thought and study.

I close what I have to say respecting the instruction given in the school with the remark, that our pupils have not only the assistance and guidance of intelligent and faithful teachers, but also the aid of the best apparatus for illustrating the subjects of study that can be made in this country or procured elsewhere. Great care has been taken to improve our own apparatus, and to obtain from European and American institutions every new device for facilitating the studies of the blind, whether its value was real, or, as too often proves to be the case upon trial, only imaginary. The spirit of conservatism which, when in excess, so stubbornly opposes all improvement, has operated even in this matter, and retained in usage in many schools the most clumsy and inconvenient apparatus, when far better could be had. So wretchedly bungling, however, and so excessively dear, were the books, maps, &c., used in European institutions when those of America were commenced, that manifest opportunity for improvement stared one in the face, and those now made here are as much superior to the old ones as are modern stereotype plates to the wooden types of Faust. But, still, the books, maps, globes, writing-boards, arithmetical plates, and the various mechanical devices for aiding the blind in their studies, are not only vastly inferior

to those used in common schools, owing to the inferiority of the sense to which they are adapted, but they are not brought to that degree of perfection of which they are capable. Encouragement should be given, therefore, to their improvement by each institution, in its own way. Besides this, there should be some measures taken for sharing the expense necessary for the production of improved books and apparatus among the different institutions to be benefited by them. There is at present a loss of money and of power by independent and isolated efforts. There is no sale, or but a very limited one, for such articles; consequently, the usual commercial stimulus is wanting.

There are usually some compensating circumstances attending ill fortune; and it may be that the extreme paucity of books for the blind, and the want of the common mechanical aids to instruction, have prevented their teachers from falling into the error of themselves depending upon text-books, and leaving their scholars to learn their lessons by rote.

The instruction given in institutions for the blind is superior to that given in common schools in this one respect at least, that it is mainly oral. The scholars do not get their lessons by rote. The teachers must first master the subject by reading and study, and then give expression to their thoughts and knowledge in their own language. It is to be hoped that the day is far distant when they will write out formal lectures, and read them year after year to their classes. There is a quickening power in living words, coming fresh from a teacher's lips, which no lessons learned from books can ever possess.

The advantages of oral instruction are so great, and it is so manifest that the blind are benefited by dispensing with some of the devices usually resorted to for facilitating study, that there is danger of its being pushed too far by teachers who do not stop to consider the philosophy of the matter. For instance, some teachers seem to think that, because seeing scholars often rely too much upon the slate and pencil, and because their own pupils can learn arithmetic, algebra, and geometry without the aid of tangible signs, therefore they had better be dispensed with altogether. But this is arguing from the abuse of a good thing against its legitimate use. They say that it is better to dispense with the aid of signs and to rely upon the abstract idea. But they cannot communicate the abstract idea of the relations between numbers without some sign. When they dispense with all tangible signs, and tell the blind scholar in so many words that 4 is the square root of 16, the words are to him the *audible* sign of the relation. When the same thing is told to the deaf mute by the manual alphabet, the positions of the fingers are to him *visible* signs of the relation, as the written letters are to the seeing scholar. To all of them the relation must be expressed by some sign. Now the general principle is manifest and sound, that ideas conveyed to, or rather excited in, the mind by means of impressions conveyed through one sense, become more vivid and permanent when repeated and confirmed by impressions through another sense.

It is true we may teach algebra to the blind without tangible algebraic signs, as we can teach geography without the aid of maps and globes, but surely by a discreet use of them we may teach better.

It is also true that signs, when used too much, act as a sort of crutch, instead of a staff, and lessen the mental vigor; by disusing them occasionally we practise an invigorating mental gymnastic, but by dispensing with them altogether we throw away crutch and staff both.

Besides going through a regular course of study in the common English branches, all the pupils receive instruction in vocal and instrumental music. This continues, and probably always will continue, to form an important part of the education of the blind. There is always a tendency, especially in young institutions, to devote too much time and labor to this branch, and it is now beginning to be felt that many bad musicians have been made of those who might have become good workmen. The study of music is so easy and pleasant to the blind; it gratifies their self-esteem so much to feel that in one department of knowledge they are quite upon an equality with others; the prospect of getting a livelihood by teaching music is so much pleasanter than of doing so by hard manual work; and there are so often floating before their minds visions of fame and fortune pleasantly won by leading a life of adventure and excitement, and going troubadouring about giving exhibitions and concerts, that almost every one is eager to study music at the expense of every thing else. The shuttle and the needle stand no chance against the violin and the piano. Then there are some who really have fine taste and sterling talent, whose example and whose success animate the others, until a sort of musical enthusiasm pervades the school. There is then a constant pressure of the musical de-

partment upon the others. There is a constant disposition to have the time devoted to it increased at the expense of the time devoted to other branches. Whatever other things are omitted or slighted, the lessons in music are sure to be well attended. Even were it a question between losing a dinner or an hour of practice, the pupil would be apt to go hungry, if, indeed, a sympathizing brother did not slyly bring him food. Now all this is so honest and so earnest; it, moreover, is so pleasant to the blind and to others to have the atmosphere of a house constantly vocal with sweet sounds, that it requires some firmness of purpose to prevent the institution from becoming a mere conservatory of music.

It is doubtless desirable, that all the pupils should have a certain degree of musical instruction; that their sense of melody should be developed and trained; and that they should acquire at least a general knowledge of vocal music, not only as an enduring source of great enjoyment to themselves during life, but as an accomplishment which will make them more agreeable members of society. It is, moreover, desirable that those pupils who have well-marked taste and talent for music, and who possess, besides these requisites, *the other equally essential requisites* for becoming good teachers of it, should have every facility given to them for becoming so; but more than this should not be done. Let the pressure be what it may, it should be withstood. It must not be forgotten, that great musical capacity and attainment may be found in those who are utterly incapable of becoming even tolerable teachers. It will be found, in the end, that it is



unwise to take persons who lack the qualifications usually deemed necessary for forming good musicians and good teachers, and try to train them for the profession because they lack besides the sense of sight.

Instruction in manual labor has always been included in our system of education, and a part of every day is still devoted to learning and practising some simple handicraft. During the past year, I have rather increased than lessened the amount of time and attention given to it.

The same experience which has shown that fewer of the blind can earn a livelihood by teaching or practising music, or indeed by teaching any thing else, than was formerly hoped and expected, has shown also that the greater part of them must depend either upon their own labor or upon charity for a livelihood. This fact shows the wisdom, and the necessity even, of training them up to work while young, and of giving them strength and dexterity of limb and hand.

The pupils have a workshop in which they spend about three hours daily, and do a variety of simple work connected with the trades which they are expected to follow afterwards. This shop is entirely separate from the workshop for adults, with whom the pupils have no intercourse whatever. As it is merely for learners, and as they spend but little time at work, it is of course an item of expense to the institution. It is kept up as part of the system of instruction, and all the pupils are required to attend it daily.

There are many disadvantages attending the common practice of excusing a certain number of pupils from work because they intend to become musicians,

or because their parents are wealthy and can support them, or, in short, because they dislike to work, and easily find some plausible pretext for being excused. I have become so convinced that making these exceptions in favor of a few is prejudicial to the interest of the majority, that I have refused to admit some who wished to make it a condition that they should not be required to work.

The reasons for adhering strictly to this rule are manifest and strong, and though there may be cases which call for exemption, they must be extraordinary ones. Consider the case even of a lad who intends to become a musician, — and it is hard to find one who does not intend to do so if he can. He spends from five to eight hours of the early part of the day in the various pursuits of the school and in the study and practice of music; now, shall he go on and study and practise in the afternoon also? He would fain do so, but the plainest principles of physiology tell us that he should not. His blindness tends to render him sedentary in his habits, and to make him exercise his brain and nervous system unduly. These having been sufficiently taxed by his morning's work, he needs something to give them rest, and to bring his muscular system into healthy exercise. There are, it is true, various ways of doing this which are more agreeable, and even more respectable, according to the doctrine of those who hold that muscular strength is a gift to be wasted in any kind of exercise, but not expended upon profitable work. A certain amount of exercise out of doors is a daily necessity, but after that, no better employment of time can be provided for our pupils than some simple handicraft. Besides

its physical advantage, it has some moral advantages for the individual and for the little community of which he is a member. Should it even cost a little sacrifice of opinion or prejudice, this is better than the gratification of selfish feelings at the expense of the feelings, or even prejudices, of others.

The daily work is an important part of the system of education, and for the majority of the pupils it is essential. The question then should be, with regard to each individual, Can he, without any injury to himself, conform to the rule imposed upon the others? If he can, he should be made to do so, be the rank and wealth of his parents what they may. The inconvenience and the evil caused by excusing some pupils, and not others, will be easily understood by all who are familiar with the practical workings of institutions.

The establishment for giving employment to the adult blind, though no longer connected with the *school*, may be properly mentioned here, because it is under the same general administration.

It is now seven years since this has been considered and conducted as a separate department. It has had no other connection with the junior department than this, that the workmen and workwomen boarded in the same house, though having their table and apartments separate from those of the younger members, just as is now done in the new work department of the New York Institution for the Blind. Even this connection does not now exist, nor is there any common boarding-house. That plan was tried several years, and found wanting in many respects. The present method is ascertained, after actual trial of both, to be much superior.

It may be remembered that in one of my reports in which the change was recommended, the advantages and disadvantages of the two different systems were pretty fully and carefully considered, not only as questions of economy, but of morals. The principal question then was, whether the workmen and workwomen should be kept under the care and guardianship of the institution, should be provided by it with board and lodging in a common establishment, and their expenses deducted from the amount of their earnings, or whether they should be treated as other grown-up people are, that is, paid in cash all they could earn, and left to the wholesome care and responsibility of providing every thing for themselves.

All who have faith in men's capacity for self-government, and who desire for them the "largest liberty," would prefer the plan which makes the blind most independent, and leaves them most to their own self-control, provided it be a feasible one. I am happy to say that the experience of the past year proves it to be not only feasible, but preferable to the old plan. The workmen and workwomen all board where they choose, and live as they choose. The men come in the morning to their work, and go away at night. Most of the women, however, have their work sent to them at their respective boarding-houses. The whole of their earnings is paid to them in cash at the end of every month, and they pay their own expenses. The institution exercises over them no more and no less control than every well-regulated establishment exercises over the persons in its employ. They are required to maintain good moral characters, to be regular, punctual, and industrious. In all other re-

spects they are, as all men and women ought to be, entirely independent.

This plan is certainly much simpler than the old one. It is less ostentatious. It dispenses with much of the show and parade of a public charitable institution, and with much of the complexity and perplexity of its management. It relieves the blind in some measure from the feeling of dependence, and from the disagreeable consciousness of being subject to particular observation as members of a public institution. At the hour when other artisans are leaving their homes and wending their way to their several workshops, the blind men, too, leave their several homes, and come together, not to eat charity soup at a common table, but to do their day's work. When this is done they leave the shop, not to repair to the common sitting-room of an asylum, where the same objects and the same associates are ever about them, but to go to the several boarding-houses and families in which they have chosen to reside.

The experience of the year shows that most of the difficulties and inconveniences which were pronounced so formidable have vanished in practice, or turned out to be, in reality, advantages. They arose in the minds of most people from the same distrust of the powers of nature, and the same lack of faith in the capacities of man, whether with eyes or without them, which makes the uninitiated look upon the whole subject of the education of the blind as a very difficult one, and consider those institutions which accomplish it to be curious and wonder-working establishments, whereas, in truth, every thing about them is quite simple.



One of the most plausible objections, and the one most strongly urged, was the difficulty, if not the impossibility, of the workmen going daily from their houses to the shop and back again. This, as was foretold in my report, has proved not to be an insurmountable, nor even a serious difficulty, but one accompanied by certain benefits which makes it upon the whole advantageous. It proves, in some respects, to be so both physically and morally; physically, because the change of air and the exercise out of doors are healthful; and morally, because every difficulty in the path of duty which is daily met and overcome gives courage and strength to meet and overcome others.

If there are a few of the workmen who wish to go back to the old system of living together in an asylum and boarding in commons, they do so solely for the sake of living a little cheaper; that is, as a matter of necessity, and not of choice.

This system has doubtless kept down the number of workmen, by excluding some blind persons who have not the mental or the bodily energy to earn quite enough for their support; and a few of these may be estimable persons, who deserve all sympathy and aid. But in this respect our system is only like many of those iron laws of nature whose hardness is cheerfully borne in view of their strength and goodness. It must be submitted to, unless we would encumber our establishment with feeble and imbecile persons, whose lack of vigor and industry would by its example lower the general standard, and whose feebleness would increase with years, until by and by we should have a mere asylum for the weak and helpless, instead of a vigorous and self-sustaining community.

It is true that there is no provision made for those most unfortunate persons who are excluded by our rule of retaining none but such as can support themselves. It is true that their case is most urgent, and their call most pressing; but we must not on that account injure the establishment we are building up. Some means or other will be provided for the helpless. A call like theirs cannot be long unheeded in a community and an age like ours. At any rate, we are to look steadily at what may be the effect in future years upon the establishment we are founding of any course of administration that we now adopt, for, unless we do so, we shall be certain to encounter serious difficulties which it may be impossible ever to remedy. If any particular course is manifestly advantageous to the great majority, and does no injustice to the others, we may safely adopt it, with the feeling of assurance that those others will be provided for in some way. The onward progress of humanity will be sure to develop in its march the necessary eleemosynary establishments for all deserving sufferers. We need not, for fear that the blind who cannot support themselves will be left to suffer, burden with their presence a community which should have no idle member. They, too, will be provided for in a fitting way. Indeed, I doubt not that there is to be a great change in the mode of viewing and discharging the duties of what is now called public charity. It may be that a higher standard of public conscience will pronounce some of the present modes upon which we plume ourselves so much, and for which we claim the merit of being particularly Christian and humane, to be only ingenious attempts to

serve God and Mammon at the same time; for the objects of our charity are gathered together in crowds, in spite of the plain principle that such congregation is not desirable, and is good only because it is cheap. People may begin to have some misgivings as to whether society is really converted to that religion which commands us to do to others as we would be done by, when they consider that to be left in old age dependent upon the tender mercies of that society is a dreadful fate, and that between dying in one of its almshouses and dying in a gutter there is not much to choose.

If we consider the principle even of orphan asylums, which certainly have been, and still are, blessed establishments, it is not quite clear that they do any thing like full justice to their inmates. Has not a poor child who is fatherless and motherless a claim to the comforts and joys of such a home, and to such a share of woman's sanctifying nurture and love, as we give to our own children, and such as, dying, we should wish to secure for them? and is it not clear that this claim is unsatisfied when we put him away from ourselves into an establishment with a hundred others, where he can have those blessed influences in homeopathic doses only? Who that has visited the foundling hospitals of Southern Europe has not been shocked by the lean and hungry looks of the infants, two, three, and sometimes even four of whom are dependent upon one nurse for nourishment? The poor little things "peak and pine" and moan; they struggle on awhile for life, and almost fight for the breast, but all in vain, for only the most robust, or those favored by the nurse

(who always has her favorite), can hold out through infancy. Such stint of bodily sustenance is too shocking to be tolerated in higher communities; but do we not stint and starve the mind and affections of orphans, and give them but the hundredth part of woman's love and nurture, and a hundredth part of the joys of a home, when in truth they need the tenth? And if it be so with the best kind of our eleemosynary institutions, and those managed by our best people, how must it be with the worst?

Be it as it may in the case of other classes of the unfortunate, I cannot but think it is unwise to found institutions with a view of congregating the blind together for life; or even to organize establishments for supplying them with work upon such a plan as will make it probable, or even possible, that they will degenerate into mere asylums. Let us rather keep the blind man's claim to social brotherhood steadily before the public, and not compound it for a sort of banishment into asylums where he may be fed and clad, and at the least cost of trouble and money.

This digression from the immediate subject of my report is not, perhaps, ill-timed, because at this moment other institutions are beginning to feel what we so long ago felt, the necessity of considering what shall be done for those of their graduates who cannot find the means of employment. I leave the subject without doing it full justice, or even completing what I would fain say here, were there time and space, and return to a notice of the condition of our workshop during the past year.

The whole number of persons employed in it has been twenty-six men, and five women. The most

of them board in respectable families in the immediate neighborhood, and go to the shop daily, where they are supplied with tools and stock, and work at piece-work. Some of them are married, and live in their own apartments; and a few are supplied with work at their own homes in the country. This latter mode is the best and most desirable of all.

Some of these are employed in cleansing and dressing raw horse-hair, and preparing it to be made into mattresses. The introduction of this kind of work is an important addition to our establishment, as it enables us to answer for the purity of the materials, the faithfulness of the work, and the length of time the hair has been in the curl; very important matters, about which few purchasers can judge for themselves. Any strong and healthy man of common intelligence can do this work, after a little practice.

Other men take the hair after it is thus prepared and thoroughly dried, and make it up into mattresses. This is nice work, which requires considerable mechanical skill, and very long practice. We have among our men some who have been at work many years upon this branch, and who manufacture as neat and durable articles as can be found.

Some men are employed in cleansing and dressing over old mattresses, for which a steaming apparatus, and every facility for doing work thoroughly and expeditiously, are provided.

Other men prepare the materials for making coarse mats; while still others braid up the prepared materials, sew the braid, and finish the mats.

Some manufacture corn brooms; others seat cane-bottomed chairs.



The women are employed in making up the coverings for the mattresses, or cushions, or in various kinds of sewing and knitting. They, for the most part, have their work sent to their respective boarding-houses, and do it there.

The work is carried on in an orderly and business-like manner. The shop is opened, and the men assemble at fixed hours. They are required to work steadily ten hours per day, and no idlers are allowed to hang about the premises.

All the manufactured articles are sent to the sales room in Bromfield Street, and sold there for the benefit of the establishment. The workmen are paid regularly every month, and their wages suffice, in most cases, with rigid economy, for their necessary expenses.

When men or women of good moral character, who were not trained in our school, or who, having recently become blind, have not learned any trade, apply for admission to this department, the practice is to receive them for six months, and give them gratuitous instruction, and at the end of that time to put them upon wages and allow them all they can earn. They are required, however, to pay their own expenses for board and clothing during the whole time.

Such has been the practical working of the system during the past year, and I am happy to say that the general result has been highly satisfactory. To the workmen it gives a feeling of independence and entire liberty and self-control ; while to the institution it greatly simplifies and facilitates the administration.

There is one satisfactory feature about it to which I have not alluded, namely, that it enables us to cal-

culate the actual cost of the department; a thing which is seldom done, if one may judge by the fact of grave statements being made in official reports, that certain workshops not only pay all their expenses, but even become a source of profit, though the persons employed are blind boys and girls who are learning trades, and working at them only three or four hours daily. Doubtless there is no intentional misrepresentation in these statements; and the error probably arises from the fact, that the cost of the board of the pupils, or the time of the master workmen, or some other important item, is omitted in the account. Of course in this way it is easy to make up a balance-sheet that will show a favorable side of profit-and-loss account. But when we consider that in ordinary workshops, filled with workmen endowed with all their senses, and working with all their might from morn to night, the profits do not greatly exceed the cost, and then read of a shop filled with blind boys learning their trades and working but few hours a day, which shop is nevertheless considered as a source of actual profit to the institution carrying it on, we marvel how intelligent persons could have been led into such a mistake.

In order to give a clear and exact view of the expenses of the Work Department, I present the following abstract from the shop books.

## ABSTRACT FROM SHOP BOOKS, DEC. 31, 1850.

## ASSETS.

|                                    |              |
|------------------------------------|--------------|
| Amount of stock on hand, . . . . . | \$6,703.80   |
| “ cash “ . . . . .                 | 65.51        |
| “ good debts, . . . . .            | 3,190.99     |
| Balance of indebtedness, . . . . . | 1,658.21     |
|                                    | <hr/>        |
|                                    | \$ 11,618.51 |

## LIABILITIES.

|                                                                      |              |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------|
| Indebtedness to Institution for original capital and loan, . . . . . | \$6,256.96   |
| Other debts, . . . . .                                               | 5,361.55     |
|                                                                      | <hr/>        |
|                                                                      | \$ 11,618.51 |

|                                                                           |             |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------|
| The amount of the balance of indebtedness, January 1, 1849, was . . . . . | \$ 1,399.99 |
| Amount of do., Jan. 1, 1850, was reduced to . . . . .                     | 1,196.49    |
| “ “ “ 1851, was increased to . . . . .                                    | 1,658.21    |

There was an apparent gain in 1849 of \$203.50, and there has been an apparent loss in 1850 of \$461.72.

|                                                                                   |             |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------|
| Amount of money distributed among the blind, in form of wages, in 1848, . . . . . | \$2,079.62  |
| Amount of do. in 1849, . . . . .                                                  | 2,584.48    |
| “ “ in 1850, . . . . .                                                            | 3,726.37    |
|                                                                                   | <hr/>       |
| Being an increase of . . . . .                                                    | \$ 1,141.89 |

The above is a correct abstract from shop books.

HENRY J. COOLIDGE, *Book-keeper.*

The undersigned, Trustee in behalf of the Commonwealth, has examined the books and accounts, and found them to be well and correctly kept. He can bear his testimony to the order, regularity, and neatness with which the business is arranged.

He is most happy to commend the establishment to the Corporation and the public as one of great practical beneficence. It helps the blind, not by giving them alms, but by helping them to help themselves.

STEPHEN FAIRBANKS, *Trustee.*

It appears from the above, that, at the closing of the accounts, Dec. 31, 1848, the balance against the

shop, that is, the amount of its debt to the Institution and other creditors, over and above its assets, was \$1,399.99. This balance was reduced on the 31st of December, 1849, to \$1,196.49; showing a gain during that year of \$203.50.

On the 31st of December, 1850, we find the balance against the shop was increased to \$1,658.21, showing a loss during the year 1850 of \$461.72. This is easily reconciled with the statement that the business was increased, and that the real cost of the shop to the Institution was lessened. Formerly the workmen were boarded by the Institution, and no charge was made on that account against the shop. Not having to pay for their board, they could work for low wages; but during the past year they had to provide board for themselves, and consequently required to have their wages increased.

The foregoing abstract from the books shows, also, that, besides the interest on the capital invested, it has cost the Institution \$461.72 to carry on the Work Department for the year.\* In other words, by means of an expenditure of \$461.72, it has enabled the blind to earn \$3,726.37 in wages, and to support themselves. The establishment, however, is now in such condition, that, without any increase of cost to the Institution, or, if any, but the most tri-

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\* This was the apparent cost to the Institution for carrying on the Department during the past year, but, in strictness, something should be added to it on account of four persons connected with the shop who boarded in the house during part of the year; something also for services of the Superintendent, who devoted part of his time to the affairs of the shop, though his salary is paid out of the general fund; and something for interest on the capital invested. At the end of another year we shall be able to calculate to a cent the actual cost.

fling one, the number of persons employed might be tripled or quadrupled.

Great improvement may yet be made, and of course we must never rest satisfied while any is possible; but thus far the result is much more satisfactory than any thing of the kind that has yet come to my knowledge.

The Institution, as I conceive, has done all that could be expected. It has expended its means very liberally, — so liberally, indeed, as materially to lessen its small capital, — in order to build up a suitable establishment for the employment of the blind. It has aided the establishment by eking out what the workmen could not make up by their own earnings. It has certainly done its part.

The blind, too, have done their part; yes! patiently and resolutely. Indeed, I am penetrated with respect for the uncomplaining fortitude with which these men and women have borne their hard lot. Talk about the courage of men who, inspired by trumpet and drum, march up to the cannon's mouth in broad day, and about the honor which they deserve! Why, what child's play is that compared to the courage of those who, struck by blindness in the pathway of life, and left in darkness without a friendly arm to lean upon, or the means of buying assistance, do not sink down and die in despair, but stand erect and meet their hard fate with unwavering fortitude, and even with cheerful resignation! This is courage indeed, and should have its meed of honor. I repeat it; the blind have deserved our respect, as well as our sympathy. They have shrunk from the thought of receiving alms; they have struggled reso-



lutely for an honest livelihood against fearful odds ; they have asked only for the means of earning a crust, and a corner in which to eat it, and to do this they are willing to work hard, and early and late, so long as work can be found to do. They surely have done their part.

There is yet a third party, without whose coöperation the attempt to enable the blind to earn an honest livelihood cannot succeed, and that party is the public. Unless the public encourage the attempt, it must fail.

Such encouragement may be asked without compromising the self-respect of the blind, for it need not in any way savor of alms-giving. Nothing, indeed, is asked for them in the shape of alms. It is not even asked that any uncommon favor should be shown them in the way of trade, or that a single penny more should be paid for goods which they manufacture than is paid for others of equal value. But this is asked with a feeling of right, that the blind shall have a fair chance in the market, and the advantage of some of those considerations which influence people in choosing the places at which they will trade. If things are equally cheap in different shops, people are led to give their custom to one rather than to another, sometimes by relationship of blood or marriage, sometimes by sympathy with the trader in religious matters, sometimes by sympathy in political matters, sometimes by sympathy arising from slighter causes, as common place of birth, and sometimes from mere desire to follow the fashion. Now the blind, being cut off by their infirmity from many of these indirect sources of profit in trade, should have at

least the advantage of the common relations of humanity, and of that sympathy with the weak and the unfortunate which naturally leads us to give our aid, when it is not due in any particular quarter, to those who most need it, and who will be most likely to be benefited by it.

If this relationship were more generally recognized, and this sympathy more generally felt, there would be very many who, having no particular reason for trading at one place rather than at another, would try whether they could not make as good a bargain at the store of the blind as elsewhere. They would probably succeed, and might continue to give it their custom. With a little more of this indirect aid, which is merely what other shops have, our operations could be greatly enlarged, and scores of blind persons, who are now languishing in idleness because there is not employment for them, would be furnished with work, and become industrious and happy.

But while I would thus press the claim of the blind to the kind consideration of the community, it would be unjust and ungrateful not to acknowledge, that there have been and are hundreds and hundreds of our most enlightened and generous inhabitants, whose patronage of our establishment has been of great importance to it.

I have before stated, that, with the means and appliances which our workshop now possesses, at least a hundred blind persons could be advantageously employed, if there were work sufficient for them ; and that there are as many as that who need work and cannot find it about their own homes.

An increase of numbers is not desirable, it is true,

except as a means of relieving great want and suffering. The increase may even be considered, in some sense, as a slight evil, which is to be borne in order to prevent a much greater one. It should be kept steadily in mind, that the best thing for the class of persons whom we would relieve is, that they should be scattered about among the general population, and should fill such places as they can in the industrial world; that the greatest service we can do to a blind person is to find him some useful occupation about his own home; that collections or communities of them are only to be formed as a matter of necessity; and that when we form or promote such communities, we should not make them so desirable as to draw together any of those who might otherwise have struggled successfully for a livelihood at home.

It will be very hard to follow the just mean in this matter, for our sympathies and our feelings will be constantly prompting us to go too far. For instance, it is desirable at this moment that the profits of our establishment should warrant our paying the men higher wages, so as to give them more of the comforts of life; but, on the other hand, it is not desirable that those comforts should be so great as to attract to the city any who are now earning a comfortable livelihood in the country, though by ever so hard labor. It is safe, however, to compute that there are at least one hundred blind persons in our State, who, without some such indirect aid as our establishment holds out, must really suffer for want of employment. To that extent, then, it is desirable that the institution should possess the means of giving additional employment and paying more wages.

More funds are wanted, it is true, but there is also wanting a wider market, and this market the public alone can supply.

As has already been said, the Institution has done its part, and the blind have done theirs; the public must do the rest, or the work cannot be perfected. To the careful attention of that public this fact is earnestly commended. If the appeal be met in the spirit of that proverb (which is a most biting satire upon the selfishness of the age), that what is everybody's business is nobody's business, then the appeal will be in vain; but if the proverb be reversed by an enlightened public conscience, and what is everybody's business becomes each body's business, then this appeal, and every other appeal in behalf of the unfortunate, will be successful.

Respectfully submitted, by

S. G. HOWE.





# OFFICERS OF THE CORPORATION,

FOR 1851.

PRESIDENT.

RICHARD FLETCHER.

VICE-PRESIDENT.

STEPHEN FAIRBANKS.

TREASURER.

T. B. WALES, JR.

SECRETARY.

SAMUEL G. HOWE.

TRUSTEES.

|                         |                                            |
|-------------------------|--------------------------------------------|
| THOMAS G. CARY,         | } <i>In behalf of the<br/>Corporation.</i> |
| THEOPHILUS P. CHANDLER, |                                            |
| J. J. DIXWELL,          |                                            |
| GEORGE B. EMERSON,      |                                            |
| BENJAMIN LORING,        |                                            |
| SAMUEL MAY,             |                                            |
| GEORGE R. RUSSELL,      |                                            |
| CHARLES SUMNER,         |                                            |

The Board of Visitors, consisting of the Governor, Lieutenant-Governor, President of the Senate, Speaker of the House, &c., have appointed

|                       |                                           |
|-----------------------|-------------------------------------------|
| STEPHEN FAIRBANKS,    | } <i>Trustees in behalf of the State.</i> |
| J. T. BUCKINGHAM,     |                                           |
| ROBERT RANTOUL, SEN., |                                           |
| HORACE MANN,          |                                           |

TWENTIETH  
ANNUAL REPORT  
OF  
THE TRUSTEES  
OF THE  
PERKINS INSTITUTION  
AND  
MASSACHUSETTS  
ASYLUM FOR THE BLIND,  
TO THE  
CORPORATION.

CAMBRIDGE:  
METCALF AND COMPANY,

PRINTERS TO THE UNIVERSITY.

1852.



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1852.





# REPORT.

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*Perkins Institution and Massachusetts Asylum for the Blind,  
Boston, January 19, 1852.*

TO THE MEMBERS OF THE CORPORATION.

GENTLEMEN, — The duty of making a Report to you touching the general history and condition of this Institution during the past year may be discharged in a brief space, and with few words.

The year has been to our Institution one of prosperity and of uninterrupted quiet. It has been favored by a continuance of those blessings which in past times have called for so much gratitude and thankfulness. There have been no accidents, no disorders, no epidemic diseases, no cases of death, among our inmates, to mar the general peacefulness, happiness, and prosperity of the year.

The Institution has been under the immediate direction of the same gentleman who has been at its head from its very beginning. He has been assisted and seconded by the same teachers who for several years past have given proof of their fidelity and ability.

The number of blind persons connected with the establishment on the 1st of January, 1851, was one hundred and nine; of these twenty-seven have left,

while twenty-two new ones have entered, so that the present number is one hundred and four. Of these, seventy-five belong to the School, or Junior Department, and are mostly of tender age; the others are youth or grown persons, who belong to the Work Department. The first live in the house, and are there taught; and they form the immediate family of the Institution. The others live in the neighborhood, and come daily to the shop to their work. They are their own masters and mistresses as much as other workmen and workwomen, and by their conduct generally show that they deserve as much to be so.

The general course of training in the Junior Department has been the same as reported in former years. For the details of this, and likewise for other matters touching the school and the workshop, we refer you to the accompanying Report of the Director.

We would ask your attention particularly to the difficulty which he points out in the way of extending the benefits of the Institution to all who need them; that is, of furnishing employment to all the adult blind who apply for it.

The experience of many years has shown clearly, that, while the ordinary profits on the retail business will enable the blind workman to live, the profits on the wholesale business will not. Now, the quantity of manufactured articles disposed of at our establishment by retail is not sufficient to give employment to all who are waiting for it, much less to all who need it.

The Director suggests two modes, by either of which this difficulty may be overcome: the one is

by funding a capital, the interest of which added to the earnings of the workmen will enable them to eke out a livelihood. For instance, a blind man may, by diligent and hard labor at the mattress business, earn twelve dollars a month upon work sold at retail prices. This sum suffices for the necessities of life, — board and clothing, — but, at the city prices of board, for no more ; it leaves no margin for comfort.

But the retail business is not large enough to give employment to all. If it is divided among them, then each man must be idle a part of the time. If, in order to keep all employed, work is taken in for dealers, and paid for at wholesale prices, the profits are lessened, so that in either case the workman receives but about nine dollars per month. This, as we have seen, is not quite enough to pay for board and clothing, and, if the workman has no means of eking it out to twelve dollars, he must give up. Not quite enough is about as bad in his case as none at all.

Now the yearly income of \$10,000 divided among twelve men, and added to what they can themselves earn, would put them upon their feet, and enable them to keep up during that struggle for life in which so many of the weak are trampled down.

As far as our means go, we have acted upon this principle, and devoted part of the funds of the Institution to the aid of the shop. But those means are limited ; too much so to meet the wants of all who apply. We would, therefore, earnestly recommend the subject to the attention of those who are so fortunate as to possess the means of doing great good to others.

With regard to the other method of increasing the

supply of work to those who are seeking it, namely, by increasing the sale of goods at retail at the store of the Institution, we can only say, as we have said before to its friends, that they can greatly aid the blind by giving their custom at the store, without loss to themselves. Indeed, there is reason to be grateful to the public for past favors, and to count upon a continuance of them.

The establishment has had a degree of success which is encouraging, and which warrants an extension of this mode of practical beneficence as fast and as far as the means can be provided.

It seems clear that the Institution should persevere in its measures, with trust that good men will give it their encouragement and help; and that God will send his blessing of success, which, indeed, is never withheld from any enterprise conceived in charity and conducted in true wisdom.

We lay before you herewith the Report of the Treasurer, and the several inventories of real and personal estate, required by law.

Finally, we commend the Institution to the continued favor of the Corporation, the Legislature, and the public.

THOMAS G. CARY,  
THEOPHILUS P. CHANDLER,  
J. J. DIXWELL,  
GEORGE B. EMERSON,  
BENJAMIN LORING,  
SAMUEL MAY,  
GEORGE R. RUSSELL,  
CHARLES SUMNER,  
J. T. BUCKINGHAM,  
STEPHEN FAIRBANKS,  
HORACE MANN,  
ROBERT RANTOUL, SEN.

## APPENDIX A.

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### REPORT OF THE DIRECTOR TO THE TRUSTEES.

GENTLEMEN, — It is an easy and agreeable duty to give a summary of the domestic history of the Institution during the past year, because there is nothing unpleasant to relate. No untoward event has interrupted or disturbed the usual quiet course of things. Indeed, if the Report were to be made solely with a view to inform and satisfy you, it might be done in one sentence, by stating that the teachers and pupils had discharged their duties and followed their various occupations faithfully and industriously.

An Annual Report, however, is expected to be of such a nature as will give information to the public. It is in some respects a sort of advertisement of the Institution, and it must, therefore, be in a great measure a repetition of what has been stated in previous Reports.

The object of this Institution is to instruct blind children and youth, and to educate and train them up in such manner as will best qualify them for the duties and trials of life, upon which they are to enter under such sore disadvantage. It is to be a



central common school, to which blind children can be sent from all parts of the State, to receive at the public expense at least as good instruction as is provided for common children, but of which they could not avail themselves in consequence of their infirmity. It was not intended for adults. It was not meant to be a permanent asylum for any. It was not originally meant even to furnish any employment, except so far as might be necessary in teaching some kinds of handicraft, by the exercise of which the pupil could afterwards earn his livelihood elsewhere. So pressing, however, was the demand for admission by those beyond the prescribed age, that many were admitted.

As class after class finished their course of instruction, it was found that some individuals were so poor, so helpless, and so friendless, that to send them out upon the world seemed like sending them to certain want and suffering. Some employment was, therefore, found for them in the Institution. As the number increased, it was found necessary to reduce this giving employment to a system, and a Work Department was organized. It was soon found necessary to have a separation between the children under instruction and the adults; that is, between those who were pupils and those who had learned their trades and gone to work at them. For some years it was thought sufficient to keep a partial separation; that is, to have them all under one roof and one general direction, but separately employed. The same system, therefore, was tried here that is now practised in some other kindred institutions. The principle was found to be good; and it was inferred that the

sooner it was perfectly carried out into practice, the better. In 1848, therefore, a large workshop was erected, at a little distance from the main edifice, but on another street, and devoted entirely to the employment of adults. Some of the workmen and workwomen, however, continued to board in the Institution until the spring of 1850, since which time the separation has been entire and complete.

We have now, therefore, a School for the young blind, in which they receive instruction in the rudiments of learning, and are taught some handicraft; and a separate institution, or Work Department, for the employment of adults, which will be spoken of separately.

### THE SCHOOL.

This has had upon an average about seventy inmates during the last year. The average age of the girls was fifteen years eight months; of the boys, fourteen years seven months. This average, it may be remarked by the way, is too high. The best years for instruction are already past for many. It is, however, lower than the average age of our pupils in former years, and lower, probably, than that of pupils in other kindred institutions.

The younger the institution, (unless, indeed, it be just organized,) the higher will generally be the average age of the pupils. Some of them, of course, have passed the age of childhood when the institution is first established, and it is not their fault that they do not apply earlier. Others are kept away

by their parents, who are naturally reluctant to commit their children to a school but recently established, and which they consider to be a doubtful experiment. It is seldom the fault of blind children that they are not sent to school early enough. In this respect they differ from seeing children. The blind child often wishes to go to school, urges his parents to send him, and, growing older, insists upon it; whereas the picture of

“ The whining school-boy, with his satchel,  
And shining morning face, creeping like snail  
Unwillingly to school,”

though an old, is still a very common one. The number of those who become blind by acute disease or by accident between the ages of tender childhood and youth, or between six and sixteen years, is so small as hardly to affect the average of the age of pupils.

Almost all who become blind by disease are made so in consequence of congenital feebleness of structure of the organs of sight, or inherited tendency to blindness; in some cases from both causes. The organs cannot resist the slightest disorder, and are usually extinguished in early childhood. Those who have eyes soundly organized, and free from any hereditary tendency to disease, go through the sports and the exposures of childhood and youth quite safely, notwithstanding the thousand apparently imminent dangers to which they are exposed. It is one of the rarest things in the world for eyes that are really sound and healthy to be destroyed. These most delicate and sensitive organs, standing out as they do in a most exposed position, in the very front of the battle, are yet most carefully guarded; and if

they do get injured, they recover very quickly. They will bear an amazing degree of *bunging*, and come out of a fortnight's mourning all the brighter for the temporary occultation.

The great difficulty that would attend the operation must make us look upon the stories we used to hear about gouging as for the most part fabulous; and as for what the nursery books tell us of a certain man who was wondrous wise, it is about as unlikely that he could contrive to scratch out both his eyes by jumping into a bramble-bush, as that he contrived to scratch them in again by repeating the operation. It is later in life, when men begin to handle gunpowder, that we find them becoming blind by accident. The number of those who lose their sight by explosions is fearfully great. Out of fifty men now or formerly employed in our workshop, nine have been reduced to their sad condition by explosions of gunpowder.

The Institution has now become so well known, and so little hesitation or reluctance is ever manifested by parents about placing children under its care, that we are able to insist upon conformity to the conditions in regard to the age of applicants. More strictness has been observed within a year or two past, and henceforward the average of ages will be much lower. This will be advantageous in many respects. It will be much easier for the teachers to instruct and train their pupils, who will be more docile and more apt to learn. It will be of great advantage to the blind as a class, for it will be a clear saving of time to have their course of elementary instruction finished two or three years earlier

in life than has hitherto been done. The average age of those who have entered since January 1, 1851, is ten years and two weeks.

The course of instruction in school is substantially the same as that pursued since the very commencement of the Institution. At six in the morning the pupils all assemble in the chapel, listen to the reading of a portion of Scripture, sing a hymn, and repeat the Lord's prayer. This is the only exercise in common, except the practice of vocal music by the choir. From the chapel the girls go to their school-room to begin their studies, and the boys to theirs; for the school-rooms are in different parts of the building.

All the fore part of the day is devoted to the common elementary branches of study, and to vocal and instrumental music. The exercises continue until one o'clock, the subject of study being changed every hour. The after part of the day is devoted to recreation, to exercise out of doors (sea-bathing in the season), and to work at some simple handicraft. In the evening there is an exercise in reading, on various subjects,—the newspapers, contemporaneous history, or light literature.

The course of instruction in school includes reading by raised letters, writing, arithmetic, geography, history, physiology, natural philosophy, &c. The writing is done by the aid of a very simple contrivance, which enables a blind person to write legibly with a common lead pencil.

In all these branches of study they make good proficiency, and probably acquire more thorough knowledge than is done by the generality of schol-



ars even in our best public schools. The classes are very small, consequently the teachers work to more advantage, and they are eagerly seconded by the pupils, who generally manifest great avidity for learning.

In all the branches, except chirography, aid and assistance are derived from the use of books and apparatus adapted to the sense of touch; but the common notion that the sole or chief reliance is upon books in raised letters is erroneous. The most important thing is oral instruction, — the living word fresh from the teacher's lips. Text-books for the blind, like those for the seeing, are very useful when they are used as sticks to walk with, and not as crutches to lean upon.

A part of each day is devoted to the study of music, both vocal and instrumental, which is taught methodically and successfully, not by rote, but by note. The blind have great fondness for this study, and great aptitude also. It is rare to find among them (as indeed it is among the seeing) one who has not sufficient perception of the relations of sound, and sufficient sense of harmony, to acquire a knowledge of the principles of music. It sometimes happens that these faculties are entirely lacking, and then of course the individual can no more conceive of musical relations between sounds, than he can conceive of the harmonious blending of colors which constitutes beauty to the eye. This is, however, a special and rare infirmity. It may not be of quite so rare occurrence among the blind as among the seeing, but it is rare enough to be remarkable. Aside from the constitutional tendency to infirmities in the sensorial

apparatus, which the lack of sight seems often to indicate, the mere incident of blindness probably makes no difference as to the native capacity for music; at any rate, it does not increase it. This is contrary to the common notion, which is, however, rather sentimental than philosophical in its origin. The blind "old man of Scio's rocky isle" gave it an impress which passed it current through twenty centuries, and Milton restamped it strong enough to send it through as many more, even without the aid of other sightless bards of less renown, so that in fancy's eye the harp is as constant an accompaniment of the blind man as the staff. But fancy often mistakes effect for cause. If a blind man comes to hear more keenly than seeing men, it is not because his ear is better organized, but because it has been more carefully and constantly trained. So, if he perceives the relations of musical sounds more readily, and comes to love harmony better, and makes more rapid proficiency in the study of music than others of equal native abilities, it is not because he is blind, but rather in spite of his being blind. If he had had sight, and still exercised his musical faculties as much as blindness induces him to do, he would have been a still better musician.

The object aimed at in our course of instruction is to give to all the pupils a general knowledge of the principles of vocal and instrumental music, and some dexterity in the use of the piano-forte. This is done without much reference to the probability of the individual ever practising music as a profession. Such knowledge, it is believed, aids the general intellectual development, improves the æsthetic sense, and culti-

vates tastes and habits which may be of great pleasure and advantage to the possessor and to his friends. The taste for music, therefore, is cultivated as part of the course of training, and instruction in its elements is carefully imparted to all the pupils. Among them, however, there are always a certain number who have uncommon tact and ability for musical attainments; and if among these there is a pupil who has the other natural gifts essential for teaching what is known, he is put upon a more careful and extended course of instruction, so that he may become a good teacher as well as a good musician.

A part of each day is devoted to some handicraft. The boys learn to make brooms, to braid mats, to seat chairs, to fill mattresses, and the like. The girls learn to sew, to knit, to braid, and to make a variety of articles. This employment trains them to habits of regularity and industry, the value of which is seen in contrast with the feverish listlessness of idle hours and vacant thoughts; and it gives skill and dexterity in the use of the fingers. It thus prepares the pupils for a life of industry, and for doing at least something towards earning their own livelihood.

Such is the general course of study and occupation, and it is pursued from five to seven years, according to the age and proficiency of the pupil. When it is finished, the pupil is discharged, and goes home to his parents and friends, and seeks some opportunity of taking a humble but useful part in the great drama of life. Institutions for the blind cannot reasonably be expected to do more than this for the generality of their pupils. They cannot be

considered as short-coming in their duty if they fail to provide employment for all their graduates. Like other educational establishments, they can teach and train their pupils in such a way as will best fit them to profit by occasions for employment that may offer, but they cannot always furnish the occasions. It would be hardly reasonable to expect an institution to undertake this as part of its system. It would be quite unreasonable to expect it to continue to be responsible for the manner in which its graduates get along in life. It is somewhat like swimming; the pupils are taught as far as they are capable of learning, and held up for a while, and perhaps a cork jacket is given to the feeble; but, once launched upon the deep waters of life, each one must work his limbs for himself.

By the course of instruction and training which they receive, the pupils are certainly much better fitted and prepared to make their way in the world than if they had been left uneducated at home. It is true that many of them find great difficulty, and have to wait a long time, before they find any suitable employment; but for the most part, in one way or another, they work their way along in the crowd, and find some means of earning their bread. They are scattered here and there in society, as they were before they came to the Institution, and this is far better than to keep them in groups. Communities of persons suffering under common infirmities are undesirable in many respects.

Some few, however, are so unfortunately situated or constituted that they cannot or do not find a fitting place and employment by which they can

live; they have no relatives or friends to help them along until they find occupation; they have no faculty for teaching music, or any thing else; they have no funds to carry on the handicrafts they may have learned; and they utterly fail to earn their own livelihood. For the benefit and aid of these, and for those also who become blind after the period of youth is passed, there has been established a

#### WORK DEPARTMENT.

By patient perseverance during many years, this department has become in reality a separate and independent one. It has no connection whatever with the Institution proper, save being under the same administration. The persons employed in it are of one or the other of the two classes mentioned above, graduates who cannot find employment elsewhere, or adult persons who became blind too late in life to enter the Institution as pupils.

It was solely with a view to giving employment to such persons that a large workshop was erected three years ago in the immediate neighborhood of the main edifice of the Institution, but quite separate from it. The shop was planned and built expressly to accommodate persons who work without sight, and to carry on advantageously the different trades which they follow. It is provided with all the necessary tools and apparatus. To this shop the adult blind come every morning and do such work as is provided for them, and they are paid in money according to the quality and amount of labor which they perform. They board where they choose, and



provide for themselves entirely; the Institution engages only to furnish them with work so long as there is a market for the articles which they manufacture. The workmen have no care or responsibility for the sale of their work.

The reasons for making the Work Department entirely separate and independent have been set forth in former Reports. Being an innovation upon the general usage, its expediency was at first doubted by some, and the plan has been freely, though courteously, criticized in the reports of superintendents of other institutions. But nothing has been said at all affecting the soundness of the *principles* upon which it is founded. On the other hand, the continued and increasing practical success of the plan shows that the *a priori* arguments in its favor were sound.

During the last year a step further was taken, by ridding the Institution from all responsibility for the purchase of stock, for waste during its manufacture, for the sale of goods, or for bad debts that might be contracted. This was done by making a contract with Mr. Patten, formerly a pupil, and for many years agent of the sales room, by which he was to take all the stock and goods on hand on the 1st of January, 1851, at a fixed valuation. He was to purchase all the additional stock that might be wanted during the year, and to make all the sales at his own risk. He was to pay the rent of the store in town, and all its current expenses; to pay the wages of the workmen, to provide fuel and every thing that might be necessary; in short, to carry on the establishment for one year, and to take the profit or suffer the loss, which was to be ascertained by a careful account of stock on the 31st of December.

The Institution, in order to exercise a wholesome supervision, and to save itself from any possible loss by mismanagement of the affairs, was to employ and pay the book-keeper, who was to be its salaried officer, and responsible to it. Mr. Patten, moreover, was restrained from contracting any debts for which the Institution could be held responsible, or from making any alterations in the rate of the workmen's wages, without the consent of the Director.

By this arrangement the whole matter was very much simplified, and additional assurance was obtained that all due economy and prudence would be exercised in the purchase and sale of goods.

The result of the operations for the year shows the wisdom of the plan, at least so far as the pecuniary test can be applied, as the following exhibit shows.

On the 1st of January, 1851, the account of the Work Department stood thus :—

| LIABILITIES.                                       |           |                     |
|----------------------------------------------------|-----------|---------------------|
| Indebtedness to Institution for original capital,  | . . .     | \$ 6,256.96         |
| “ “ on other account,                              | . . .     | 5,361.55            |
|                                                    |           | <u>\$ 11,618.51</u> |
| ASSETS.                                            |           |                     |
| Amount of stock on hand,                           | . . . . . | \$ 6,703.80         |
| “ cash,                                            | . . . . . | 65.51               |
| “ good debts,                                      | . . . . . | 3,190.99            |
|                                                    |           | <u>\$ 9,960.30</u>  |
| The amount of debts over the amount of credits, or |           |                     |
| the balance of indebtedness, at that time being    |           | \$ 1,658.21         |
|                                                    |           | <u>\$ 11,618.51</u> |

The balance of indebtedness on the 1st of January, 1850, was only \$ 1,196.49, so that it had been increased \$ 461.72, which was the apparent loss, or cost to the Institution of carrying on the Department, during the year 1850.

On the 1st of January, 1852, the books presented the following exhibit: —

#### LIABILITIES.

|                                                  |              |
|--------------------------------------------------|--------------|
| Indebtedness to Institution for original capital |              |
| and loan, . . . . .                              | \$ 6,256.96  |
| Other accounts, . . . . .                        | 6,174.19     |
|                                                  | <hr/>        |
|                                                  | \$ 12,431.15 |

#### ASSETS.

|                                    |              |
|------------------------------------|--------------|
| Amount of stock on hand, . . . . . | \$ 7,545.46  |
| “    cash, . . . . .               | 546.55       |
| “    good debts, . . . . .         | 3,453.26     |
|                                    | <hr/>        |
|                                    | \$ 11,545.27 |
| Balance of indebtedness, . . . . . | 885.88       |
|                                    | <hr/>        |
|                                    | \$ 12,431.15 |

The sum of \$ 772.33 represents the profits of the year, which is placed to Mr. Patten's credit account, making the balance of indebtedness \$ 1,658.21, the same as last year. Allowing that a few of the small debts may be of doubtful value, the agent will receive as profits about \$ 650; the amount of money paid in wages to other blind persons during the year was \$ 3,687.89; in all, \$ 4,337.89. In 1850, the amount thus paid was \$ 3,726.37. Increase in 1851, \$ 611.52. The amount of sales in 1851 was \$ 18,370.14.

Here, then, we have the result of the year's operations as plain as figures can make them.

The Institution paid the salary of the book-keeper, \$ 500. It allowed its market-wagon to do a certain amount of carting for the shop, to the value, say, of \$ 200; making in all, \$ 700. The shop has been of no other charge to the Institution. Not a dollar has been drawn from the treasury on its account; and none of the workmen or workwomen have been boarded in the Institution, or at its expense.

There is of course some indirect expense which would be reckoned in an establishment the sole object of which was pecuniary gain ; namely, the interest of the capital originally invested in the building and in the stock. But the object of this Institution is beneficence, and not pecuniary gain ; it surely gets a high rate of interest of that kind upon the capital invested, by giving employment and support to the blind. But however high may seem the cost, it is at least some satisfaction to be able to state with precision what it is, — a thing which it was difficult to do, so long as the Work Department formed a part of the principal establishment, and so long as the members of it were boarded in the Institution.

The cost will be lessened during the current year, as a contract has already been agreed upon which is more favorable to the Institution. It is probable, moreover, that it will go on lessening until it is reduced to its minimum, for we shall have a guarantee for the greatest possible economy, not only in the character of an agent whose faithfulness has been long tried, but also in his pecuniary interest ; every cent earned or saved is a gain to him, every cent wasted or lost is a loss to him.

The present mode is, moreover, not only the cheapest, but the simplest and most satisfactory, of any before tried here, or that has been brought into public notice as tried elsewhere. If there should be any failure or disappointment, it will be the fault of individual administration, and not of the system. It is the business of one man, and the one man who has nothing else to do but to attend to it, and whose success or failure depends upon its success or failure.

No board of managers and no committee can attend to the details of such an establishment as one man can, if he makes it his own business.

But whatever degree of excellence may be attained in any such establishment serves only as a vantage-ground from which to see still further improvements to be made. We must not expect to attain the highest good, but only to keep moving towards it. There are some further improvements already indicated as desirable and attainable in our Work Department. One is, that all the profits of the work should be divided among all the workmen. In order to bring this about, they should take part of the risk; they should receive only part of their wages during the year, and the balance, together with whatever share of the profits might fall to them, at the end of it.\*

Some of the reasons for desiring this change are obvious. The moral effect of greater mutual interest and more zealous coöperation would be certainly good. The material effect could hardly fail to be so likewise. More work would be done in a given time. It would be done with greater care, and with more economy of stock.

If the amount of profit upon the work done last year had been increased twenty-five per cent. and divided among the workmen, they would have received

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\* It should be understood that, in speaking, here and elsewhere, of the *profit* of the Work Department, it is not meant that there is any real pecuniary gain, for there is none; but, on the contrary, there is a real loss, if every thing is reckoned. What is meant is the balance of annual receipts over the annual expenses which are actually charged. There are two items not charged, interest money, and salary of book-keeper. The Institution, in order to encourage the Department, contributes this amount annually.



about twenty dollars apiece over and above the amount of wages actually paid them. There can be no doubt they might have been considerably increased by a system which enlisted more zeal and more hearty coöperation among the workmen. It is not meant that any fault is to be found with them; they performed their tasks and were paid for them; but under a joint-stock system, part of their task would be for each one to have a care for the general prosperity of the concern.

There have been hitherto insurmountable objections to this plan. Many of the workmen could not afford to have any part of their wages retained, for they could barely support life when receiving them in full. Another objection to this plan has been, that it was quite uncertain whether any thing would remain over at the end of the year to be divided, even if the men were ever so industrious and economical. The result, however, of several successive years, has now removed this doubt. With ordinary prudence, and with the advantages held out to the Department by the Institution, it must be profitable.

Another improvement greatly to be desired is an increase of work, so as to furnish constant employment all the year round to a greater number of workmen; for there are many needing it, to whom it cannot be given at present.

It is not to be expected that there can be any very rapid or considerable increase of the sales at our wareroom; not enough to meet the demand of blind persons for work. The only way seems to be to go into the wholesale business, and to manufacture articles for the dealers to sell again, which, of

course, would have to be done at lower prices. But the prices which can be paid to the blind for their work, even while it is sold at retail, are so small, that they think no reduction can be made and leave them a living profit. Some reduction, however, can be made, and will have to be made, as soon as orders for work come in abundantly enough to insure constant occupation. Now, they lose some time at some seasons. If it were not so, and if the men were sure of work all the time, their wages might be reduced twenty per cent., and still amount to as much as they do now. It would, moreover, be much better for them to be regularly occupied a stated number of hours every day, than to be idle at certain seasons, and be forced to work extra hours at other seasons.

There is need of a steady and constant market for their work, and the only way to secure this seems to be to go into the wholesale business, that is, to work for the dealers. Now if, in order to compete successfully with other establishments, the wages of our workmen must be reduced so much that they cannot live comfortably by them, (and this seems likely, since a blind man cannot be expected to compete successfully with a seeing one,) then it must be made up to them in some way; that is, the establishment must be carried on at an increased loss. For example, if a blind man must have fifty cents a day in order to live, but can earn only forty cents, the other ten must be made up to him in some other way. The most satisfactory one would be by the investment of a fund, the interest of which should be devoted to eking out the wages of each industrious blind man, so as to raise them enough to support life

in comfort; that is, to pay him ten cents a day upon condition that he should earn forty cents by his own labor.

It is hard to conceive a more practical or less objectionable form of beneficence. It is based upon the principle of Help yourself and I'll help you. May it commend itself to the reason as well as the hearts of those to whom much has been given, and who wish so to employ their trust as to make it produce the greatest good in the present and in the future.

S. G. HOWE.

## APPENDIX

## GENERAL ABSTRACT OF THE

Dr. *Perkins Institution and Massachusetts Asylum for the*

|                |                                       |              |
|----------------|---------------------------------------|--------------|
| Dec. 31, 1851. | To amount of Cash paid upon Orders of |              |
|                | Auditors of Account for Expenses of   |              |
|                | the Institution, . . . . .            | \$ 22,126.82 |
|                | Cash to new Account, . . . . .        | 1,560.09     |
|                |                                       | <hr/>        |
|                |                                       | \$ 23,686.91 |

---

*Boston, January 12th, 1852.*

THE undersigned, a Committee appointed to examine the Accounts of the Treasurer of the Perkins Institution and Massachusetts Asylum for the Blind for the year 1851, have attended to that duty, and hereby certify that they find the accounts to be correctly cast and properly vouched, and the balance to be one thousand five hundred sixty dollars  $\frac{9}{100}$ , say \$1,560.09.

The Treasurer also exhibited to us evidence of the following property belonging to the Institution : —

|    |                                       |              |
|----|---------------------------------------|--------------|
| 4  | Shares in Boston and Maine Railroad,  | \$ 412.00    |
| 9  | “ New England Bank, . . . .           | 900.00       |
| 83 | “ State Bank, . . . . .               | 4,980.00     |
| 20 | “ Tremont Bank, . . . . .             | 1,975.00     |
| 46 | “ Columbian Bank, . . . . .           | 4,519.00     |
| 35 | “ Atlas Bank, . . . . .               | 3,368.75     |
| 25 | “ Concord Railroad, . . . . .         | 1,250.00     |
| 2  | Certificates City Boston Water Scrip, | 2,000.00     |
|    |                                       | <hr/>        |
|    |                                       | \$ 19,404.75 |

## B.

## TREASURER'S REPORT FOR 1851.

*Blind in Account with* T. B. WALES, JR., *Treasurer.* Cr.

|               |                                                                                                               |                     |
|---------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------|
| Jan. 1, 1851. | By Cash on hand from Account of 1850,                                                                         | \$ 3,820.48         |
|               | By Cash received from State of Massachusetts, and sundry Accounts as per Account this day rendered, . . . . . | 19,866.43           |
|               |                                                                                                               | <u>\$ 23,686.91</u> |

*Errors excepted.*

(Signed,)

T. B. WALES, JR., *Treasurer.*

*Boston, Dec. 31, 1851.*

---

|                                                                        |                     |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------|
| Amount brought up, . . . . .                                           | \$ 19,404.75        |
| Deed of Land in South Boston, purchased in June, 1844, . . . . .       | \$ 765.64           |
| Deed of Land in South Boston, purchased 4th 4th March, 1847, . . . . . | 5,000.00            |
| Deed of Land in South Boston, purchased in September, 1848, . . . . .  | 5,500.00            |
| Deed of Land in South Boston, purchased in July, 1850, . . . . .       | 1,020.25            |
| Deed of Land in South Boston, purchased 16th January, 1850, . . . . .  | \$ 1,762.50         |
|                                                                        | <u>14,048.39</u>    |
|                                                                        | <u>\$ 33,453.14</u> |

NATH. H. EMMONS, }  
 GEORGE W. WALES, } *Committee.*



## APPENDIX

## GENERAL ANALYSIS OF RECEIPTS

|                                                                                                              |              |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------|
| Cash paid sundry Bills for general Repairs upon House and<br>levelling of Grounds, as per Steward's Account, | \$ 3,396.57  |
| “ “ for Groceries, Provisions, &c., . . . .                                                                  | 3,972.34     |
| “ “ for Salaries of Teachers, Domestics, &c., . . . .                                                        | 7,233.81     |
| “ “ for Printing and Manufacturing Apparatus, . . . .                                                        | 675.03       |
| “ “ for Stock and Apparatus for Boys' Workshop, . . . .                                                      | 1,455.03     |
| “ “ for Sheet Music and Musical Instruments, . . . .                                                         | 182.55       |
| “ “ for Clothing, . . . . .                                                                                  | 99.40        |
| “ “ for Furniture, . . . . .                                                                                 | 331.74       |
| “ “ for Insurance, . . . . .                                                                                 | 160.00       |
| “ “ for Coal and other Fuel, . . . . .                                                                       | 873.49       |
| “ “ for Medicine, Leeches, &c., . . . . .                                                                    | 17.79        |
| “ “ for Leaders, . . . . .                                                                                   | 33.83        |
| “ “ for new Bathing-house on Sea-shore, . . . . .                                                            | 269.23       |
| “ “ for Stable and other Expenses, . . . . .                                                                 | 297.00       |
|                                                                                                              | <hr/>        |
|                                                                                                              | \$ 18,997.81 |
| Disbursement on Account of the School for Idiotic Persons, . . . . .                                         | 2,821.54     |
| Disbursement of Money for Individual Pupils, . . . . .                                                       | 307.47       |
|                                                                                                              | <hr/>        |
|                                                                                                              | \$ 22,126.82 |
| Cash to new Account, . . . . .                                                                               | 1,560.09     |
|                                                                                                              | <hr/>        |
|                                                                                                              | \$ 23,686.91 |

## C.

## AND EXPENDITURES FOR 1851.\*

|                                                    |                      |  |  |  |          |                            |
|----------------------------------------------------|----------------------|--|--|--|----------|----------------------------|
| Balance from old Account,                          |                      |  |  |  |          | \$ 3,820.48                |
| Cash received from State of Massachusetts,         |                      |  |  |  |          | 9,000.00                   |
| “ “ from other States,                             |                      |  |  |  |          | 3,218.80                   |
| “ “ from Donations : —                             |                      |  |  |  |          |                            |
|                                                    | G. B. Emerson,       |  |  |  | \$ 25.00 |                            |
|                                                    | Francis Fisher,      |  |  |  | 500.00   |                            |
|                                                    | Miss Tufts's Legacy, |  |  |  | 100.00   |                            |
|                                                    |                      |  |  |  |          | <u>625.00</u>              |
| “ “ for Private Pupils,                            |                      |  |  |  |          | 555.00                     |
| “ “ for Books and Apparatus sold to other Institu- |                      |  |  |  |          |                            |
|                                                    | tions,               |  |  |  |          | 568.50                     |
| “ “ for Dividends on Stocks,                       |                      |  |  |  |          | 1,352.10                   |
|                                                    |                      |  |  |  |          | <u>\$19,139.88</u>         |
| “ “ for Disbursement on Account of School for      |                      |  |  |  |          |                            |
|                                                    | Idiotic Persons,     |  |  |  |          | 4,449.76                   |
| “ “ for Individual Pupils,                         |                      |  |  |  |          | 97.27                      |
|                                                    |                      |  |  |  |          |                            |
|                                                    |                      |  |  |  |          | <u><u>\$ 23,686.91</u></u> |

*Errors excepted.*

S. G. Howe.

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\* Some of the items represent more than the ordinary annual cost, being the amount of bills paid in 1851, for expenses incurred in 1850.

## TERMS OF ADMISSION.

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YOUNG blind persons, of good moral character, can be admitted to the School by paying \$ 160 *per annum*. This sum covers all expenses, except for clothing; namely, board, washing, medicines, the use of books, musical instruments, &c. The pupils must furnish their own clothing, and pay their own fares to and from the Institution.

There is a vacation in the Spring, and another in the Autumn, The friends of the pupils can visit them whenever they choose.

Indigent blind persons, of suitable age and character, belonging to Massachusetts, can be admitted gratuitously, by application to the Governor for a warrant.

The following is a good form, though any other will do : —

“ TO HIS EXCELLENCY THE GOVERNOR : —

“ SIR, — My son, (or daughter, or nephew, or niece, as the case may be,) named A. B., and aged      , cannot be instructed in the common schools for want of sight. I am unable to pay for the tuition at the Perkins Institution and Massachusetts Asylum for the Blind, and I request that your Excellency will grant a warrant for free admission.

“ Very respectfully,      ——— ———.”

The application may be made by any relation or friend, if the parents are dead or absent.

It should be accompanied by a certificate from one or more of the Selectmen of the town, or Aldermen of the city, in this form : —

“ I hereby certify, that, in my opinion, Mr. ——— ——— is not a wealthy person, and that he cannot afford to pay \$ 160 *per annum* for his child's instruction.

(Signed,)      “ ——— ———.”

There should also be a certificate, signed by some regular physician, in this form : —

"I certify, that, in my opinion, ——— has not sufficient vision to be taught in common schools; and that he is free from epilepsy, and from any contagious disease.

(Signed,) "—————."

These papers should be done up together, and directed to "The Secretary of State, State-House, Boston, Mass."

An obligation will be required from some responsible person, that the pupil shall be removed without expense to the Institution, whenever it may be desirable to discharge him.

The usual period of tuition is from five to seven years.

Indigent blind persons residing in Maine, New Hampshire, Vermont, Connecticut, Rhode Island, and South Carolina, by applying as above to the "Commissioners for the Blind," care of the Secretary of State in the respective States, can obtain warrants of free admission.

For further particulars, address Dr. S. G. Howe, Director of the Institution for the Blind, Boston, Mass.

The relations or friends of the blind who may be sent to the Institution are requested to furnish information in answer to the following questions:—

1. What is the age of the applicant?
2. Where was he born?
3. Was he born blind?
4. If not born blind, at what age did he become so?
5. What is the supposed cause of the blindness?
6. Have there been any cases of blindness, or deafness, or insanity, in the family of the applicant, among his brothers and sisters, parents, grandparents, uncles, aunts, or cousins?
7. Were his parents or grandparents affected with scrofula, in any form; with consumption; humors, such as salt-rheum; eruptions of any kind; or had they any peculiarity of bodily constitution whatever?
8. Were the parents or the grandparents of the applicant related to each other by blood? If so, in what degree?

OFFICERS OF THE CORPORATION,  
FOR 1852.

---

PRESIDENT.

RICHARD FLETCHER.

VICE-PRESIDENT.

STEPHEN FAIRBANKS.

TREASURER.

T. B. WALES, JR.

SECRETARY.

SAMUEL G. HOWE.

TRUSTEES.

|                         |                                            |
|-------------------------|--------------------------------------------|
| THOMAS G. CARY,         | } <i>In behalf of the<br/>Corporation.</i> |
| THEOPHILUS P. CHANDLER, |                                            |
| GEORGE B. EMERSON,      |                                            |
| NATHANIEL H. EMMONS,    |                                            |
| BENJAMIN LORING,        |                                            |
| SAMUEL MAY,             |                                            |
| GEORGE R. RUSSELL,      |                                            |
| CHARLES SUMNER,         |                                            |

The Board of Visitors, consisting of the Governor, Lieutenant-Governor, President of the Senate, Speaker of the House, &c., have appointed

|                    |                                           |
|--------------------|-------------------------------------------|
| THOMAS T. BOUVÉ,   | } <i>Trustees in behalf of the State.</i> |
| J. T. BUCKINGHAM,  |                                           |
| ISAAC EMERY,       |                                           |
| STEPHEN FAIRBANKS, |                                           |



















